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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the efficacy of a program designed to teach parents how to read to their low-achieving school-aged children to help increase the children's word recognition and comprehension. Parents whose children (grades 1-4) were receiving additional school assistance from a resource specialist were invited to enroll in the program. Fourteen parents were instructed once a week for 8 weeks in 2-hour time blocks, and were advised to read to their children every day using techniques and strategies modeled during classes. Results showed significant gains in all areas of word recognition--identifying words both in isolation and in context. There was also a significant increase in students' comprehension on both uncued and cued recall performance measures. As a result of the program, student attitudes towards reading also improved; students read more, both in the classroom and at home. Results confirmed the efficacy of a parent program to help low-achieving school-aged children. (Eight tables and 5 figures are included; 61 references and 7 appendixes are attached.) (Author/PRA)

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The Efficacy of a Program for Teaching Parents How to Read to Low-Achieving School-Aged Children to Increase Their Word Recognition and Comprehension

by

Lisa Karen Soiferman

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of the University of Manitoba

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of Master of Education

September 1991

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The undersigned certify that they have read a Master's thesis entitled: The Efficacy of a Program for Teaching Parents How to Read to Low-Achieving School-Aged Children to Increase Their Word Recognition and Comprehension

submitted by Lisa Karen Soiferman

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

The Thesis Examining Committee certifies that the thesis (and the oral examination, if required) is:

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Date September 5, 1991

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the efficacy of a program designed to teach parents how to read to their low-achieving school-aged children to help increase the children's word recognition and comprehension. Parents whose children were receiving additional school assistance from a resource specialist were invited to enroll in the program. Grade placement of the students ranged from grades one to four. Fourteen parents were instructed once a week for eight weeks in two hour time blocks. Parents were advised to read to their children every day using techniques and strategies modeled during classes.

Results showed significant gains in all areas of word recognition - identifying words both in isolation and in context. There was also a significant increase in students' comprehension on both uncued and cued recall performance measures. As a result of the program, student attitudes towards reading also improved. Students read more, both in the classroom and at home.

In general, the efficacy of a parent program to help low-achieving school-aged children was confirmed based on all measures of word recognition and comprehension.

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Chapter 1

NATURE OF THE STUDY

Parents are the first teachers children meet (Grinnel, 1984; Morrow, 1989; Potter, 1989). For the first five years of their children's lives, before formal schooling, parents are in the best position to shape literacy experiences.

Based on her studies of parents and their preschool children Morrow (1989) found that:

> The success of the school literacy program frequently depends on the literacy environment at home. Studies carried out in homes have been a major catalyst for the new look in early literacy strategies. Because many children come to school already reading and writing, apparently without formal instruction, investigators began to study the characteristics of those children and of their homes. Such children were said to have "learned to read naturally," a phrase that suggests that their ability to read evolved like their acquisition of language or their learning to walk. (p.23)

I can attest to the important role of the home in the development of early literacy. My son learned to read when he was four years old. I didn't formally "teach" him to read so it might be said that he learned to read "naturally" in much the same way that he learned to walk and talk. From the time he was a few days old, Marc was immersed in print. We read books on a daily basis, we discussed signs in the environment, he watched as I wrote letters and university papers, we discussed his books, and he sat beside me as I helped my daughter, Heather, with her homework. For Marc, learning to read was as natural and as gradual as his acquisition of language. Because of his constant exposure to books and print from birth, he developed a large sight vocabulary as well as a number of analytical reading skills. His ability to read did not just happen. As Morrow (1989) states, reading "developed in a natural way within a rich literacy environment" (p.25).

Research (Clark, 1984; Durkin, 1966; Morrow, 1989; Teale, 1978) indicates that preschool children who are read to regularly by parents, siblings, or other individuals in the home, and who have parents who are themselves habitual readers, are the youngsters who show a natural interest in books and become early readers. Through frequent story readings, children become familiar with book language and realize the function of written language.

Smith (1983) believes that:

> The only way to acquire a starting familiarity with the written language of various kinds of literature is to have heard it read aloud ... students will not learn how to read and enjoy literature if they are unfamiliar with the language and conventions of the literature they are trying to read. (p.78)

Story reading between adults and children is almost always pleasurable. This, in turn, builds interest and a desire to read (Sulzby, 1985; Teale, 1978). Continued exposure to books develops children's vocabulary and sense of story, both of which help them learn to read.

The best conditions for literacy learning, based on the studies of early readers, (Sulzby, 1985) appear to be in homes with committed parents. Storybook reading, in particular, is beneficial. There is overwhelming evidence (Burns & Collins, 1987; Durkin, 1966; Feitelson et al, 1986; Flood, 1977; Ninio & Bruner, 1978; Pappas & Brown, 1987; Purcell-Gates, 1988; Sulzby, 1985; Thomas, 1985; Teale, 1984) to indicate that preschool children who are read storybooks on a regular basis achieve literacy sooner and more easily than children who have not been read to.

Many studies (Durkin, 1966; Goodman, 1984; Mason, 1980; Purcell-Gates, 1988; Schieffelin & Cochrane-Smith, 1984; Sulzby, 1985; Teale, 1984) emphasize the importance of having parents actively involved in their children's literacy development. It seems logical to infer that among the reasons that some children experience difficulty learning to read is lack of preschool reading experiences and lack of parental involvement.

Statement of the Problem

This study sought to determine if teaching parents how to read aloud to their children would benefit under-achieving school-aged learners. Read aloud sessions were chosen based on the assumption that all children who cannot read fluently, despite one or more years of instruction, are still very much in the emergent stages of literacy. Children who are not yet literate need more experience with language - adults reading to them, willing to accept their gross approximations of reading, and willing to tolerate their miscues.

Harp and Brewer (1991) support this assumption by stating:

> Children who have learned to speak in an atmosphere where everyone expects that they will be successful may be confronted with an entirely different attitude when they are attempting to learn to read and write. It is not at all

> uncommon to find instructional programs and teachers that regard each error as cause for remediation of some kind, rather than an indication of the child's current thinking. (p.15)

Supportive parents can provide their children with the same environment and conditions for nurturing literacy that learning language requires: "time, support and an expectation of success" (Harp & Brewer, 1991, p. 16).

In schools, educators work extensively with children having difficulties learning to read, but such programs don't often involve parents. There are many parents who would like to help their children become more fluent readers but either lack the expertise or do not feel confident about their ability to accomplish this goal.

The general research question therefore is:

> Will a program for parents of low-achieving readers that models and demonstrates storybook sharing activities to carry out at home, result in benefits for the children in terms of increased reading fluency (word recognition accuracy), comprehension, and attitude toward reading?

Scope of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of a parent program on the reading performance of low-achieving school-aged children. Two important components of the parent program were raising parental awareness regarding: (a) why parents should read to their children; and (b) how children learn to read. In addition, the focus of the parent workshops was on how to interact with children while reading. Children's performance was assessed through the administration of an informal reading inventory (IRI). The Bader Reading and Language Inventory (1983) was chosen to determine changes in reading level by analyzing: (a) word recognition accuracy both when words appear in isolation (word list) and in context (passages); and (b) comprehension, as measured by the total number of ideas recalled in the oral retelling of reading passages (uncued recall), and by the number of questions answered correctly after passage reading (cued recall).

Fourteen grade one to four students who were reading below grade level as determined by both the classroom teacher and the reading specialist, and verified by the investigator's administration of the IRI, served as subjects. (See Appendix A for a sample of the word list and pre - and posttest Bader IRI passages.) The parents of the targeted students were contacted by the resource specialist and invited to participate. Students selected did not appear to have any serious physical or emotional problems that interfered with

learning.

The parent program was offered over a period of eight weekly sessions and more specifically involved instruction regarding:

1. How to read to children - Modeling various techniques such as DR-TA (directed reading-thinking activities, Stauffer, 1975); Paired reading (Topping, 1987); Repeated readings (Samuels, 1979); and Story re-telling (Morrow, 1985);

2. Why it is important to read to children - Discussion of what children can learn from storybook reading. Benefits considered included the development of vocabulary, background knowledge, book language, increased comprehension and positive reading attitudes; and

3. How children begin to read and implications for instruction. Three conceptual models of the reading process were presented - reading as being: (a) data driven or proceeding from letters to sounds to words; (b) a psycholinguistic guessing game in which readers predict up coming words based upon meaning and language sense; or (c) a combination of the two, suggesting that an interactive approach to teaching reading that permits the use of all information sources to facilitate word identification is most effective.

Parents also took part in various activities that demonstrated what is involved in the reading process. These

activities included having participants: (a) attempt to decode a sentence:

1. without knowing the sound-symbol correspondences,
2. with no punctuation;
3. with print going from right to left; and
4. with no spaces between the words,

and (b) read a passage without a title to demonstrate the importance of discussing the book before it is read. Activating prior knowledge in this way aids comprehension by having children use topic familiarity to hypothesize about what they are going to read.

Pre - and post IRI results were compared to measure what effects, if any, teaching parents how to interact with their children during storybook reading at home had on the childrens' word recognition, comprehension, and attitudes toward reading.

Information regarding attitude was obtained through:

1. pre and post program questionnaires for students;
2. pre and post program questionnaires for parents;
3. parent-child interactions - three, at home audio-taped sessions to determine: (a) the student's questions before, during and after reading; (b) the parent's questions before, during and after reading. (See Appendix B for questionnaires.)

Field notes were compiled by the investigator after sessions and in conversation with teachers - classroom and resource, principal, vice-principal and parents.

Statement of the Hypothesis

Given students not yet reading after having spent from 6 months to 4 years in school receiving formal instruction under the guidance of both classroom teachers and resource specialists, the following hypotheses were generated:

Hypothesis 1. Regarding gains in word recognition: There would be no significant difference in the word recognition of the children after the eight weeks of parental instruction regarding storybook reading strategies to be employed at home as measured by the Bader IRI (1983) regarding:

1. words in isolation
2. words in context

Hypothesis 2. Regarding comprehension: There would be no significant difference in comprehension as measured by the comprehension component of the Bader IRI (1983) with respect to:

1. uncued recall
2. cued recall

Hypothesis 3. Regarding change in attitude to reading: There would be no differences in the children's attitude toward reading expressed in interviews with both the parents and the children.

Definition of Terms

Operational terms used throughout this study have been defined as follows with terms grouped under three major headings: general parent procedures; instructional strategies; and measurement and analysis terms.

A. General Parent Procedures

For the purposes of this study parent instruction means that parents took part in an eight session weekly program that demonstrated, modeled and provided parents with practice in the following strategies to use when he/she read aloud to his/her child. The strategies were patterned after Mason et al (1989), Thomas (1985), and Flood (1977) who, after working with parents and their preschoolers, recommended:

1. pre-reading activities - setting a purpose, talking about the title, the author and the illustrator;
2. during reading activities - encouraging parents to modify their voices to create emphasis and effect, stop and respond to their child's questions or comments, elaborate when they thought their children needed more information and monitor their children's comprehension by asking them questions and soliciting responses about the text and pictures.

3. after reading the story - talking about the story by telling the child about their favourite part and asking for the child's input. As the sessions continued, parents were also asked to have their children retell the story in their own words.

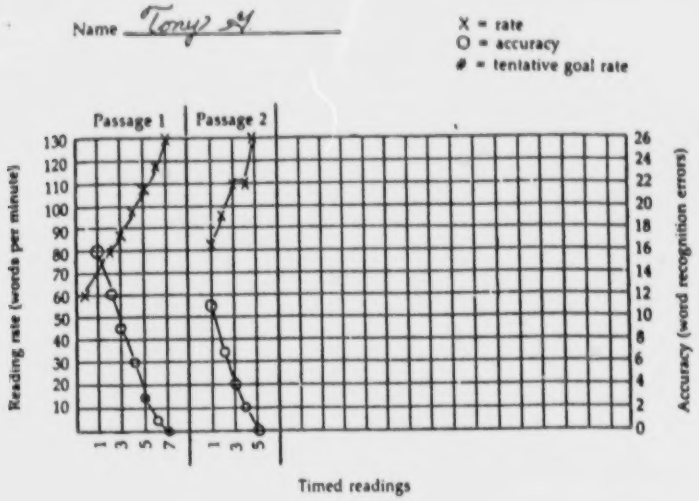
B. Instructional Strategies

The following, more specific strategies were modeled in class and parents had the opportunity to practice them before using them at home with their children.

DR-TA. DR-TA refers to a directed reading - thinking activity in which the reader becomes actively involved in reading a selection. It involves making predictions about the story, stopping periodically to check those predictions and making new predictions based on the information contained in the selection. The procedure allows the reader to develop a purpose for reading and to relate what he/she knows about the topic (Stauffer, 1975).

Paired reading. This term refers to an instructional technique in which the parent and the child take turns reading from a story selection and/or the parent fades in and out during the reading, depending on the needs of the child (Topping, 1987).

Repeated Readings. This practice activity involves having the child read a story passage (approximately 100 words) over and over to achieve fluency while reading rate and accuracy are measured and documented across trials (Samuels, 1979). See accompanying graph (Gillet & Temple, 1986) for keeping a record of progress. For the purpose of this study, the same storybook was read over and over.



C. Measurement and Analysis Terms

Fluency. The term fluency applies to oral reading that is essentially free of hesitations and miscues due to difficulty with word recognition. Fluent reading as used in this study does not imply reading with comprehension nor does it mean word by word calling of individual words (Harris & Hodges, 1981).

Miscues. A miscue is an oral reading response that differs from the expected response to the written text (Harris & Hodges, 1981).

Emergent Literacy. As used in this study, this term represents the beginnings of reading and writing for the child. It should be thought of as literacy and learning prior to formal school instruction. It takes into account children's re-readings of familiar storybooks (Teale, 1987) as well as their writing attempts which reinforce their discovery of alphabetic principles.

Journal. For the purposes of this study the term journal refers to a daily record that is kept by the parent. It includes the titles of the books read, the authors, and responses by the parent and the child to the content, the illustrations and the reading strategies being used (Harris & Hodges, 1981).

Attitude to reading. For the purposes of this study, attitudes to reading were measured by the pre and post program administration of a reading questionnaire (adapted from Bader, 1983) to see how both the parents and their children viewed themselves as readers before and after the eight weekly sessions. (See Appendix B.)

Informal reading inventory (IRI). An Informal Reading Inventory is an individual test which consists of a graded word list and two series of graded paragraphs of increasing difficulty: one to be read aloud by the pupil and the other of comparable difficulty to be read silently (Harris & Hodges, 1981). For the purposes of this study, only oral reading was

required, one passage serving as a pretest and the alternate passage as a posttest.

The administration of an IRI yields two measures of word recognition (words in isolation from the word list administration, and words in context based on oral reading of the passages), and two comprehension measures (oral retelling or uncued recall, and cued recall, questions based on the context). The Bader Reading and Language Inventory (1983) was used in this study. (Refer again to Appendix A.)

Word recognition accuracy. Word recognition accuracy refers to the percentage of words which are correctly pronounced in isolation and/or in a printed passage.

Uncued recall. Uncued recall is the process of retelling orally from memory what the story is about. No questions or probes to prompt memory are used. Therefore, both comprehension and memory are measured. Story retellings were scored using the number of ideas recalled from each passage following the scoring templates provided in the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (1983). The terms uncued recall and story retelling are used interchangeably.

Retelling. As used in this study, this term is a measure of comprehension. It is used synonymously with the term uncued recall and is the process in which the reader, having orally read the story, describes what happened (Harris & Hodges, 1981).

Cued Recall. The term cued recall refers to the process of remembering or recalling what has been read as measured by teacher/examiner questions. In this study the questions following the passages in Bader were used to measure cued recall.

Composite Index. This term refers to reading gains, taking into account not only the actual score at the highest level of readir obtained on each posttest measure (word recognition accu acy and comprehension), but the change in reading level. Composite index gain scores are determined by calculating the difference between the pre and posttest scores in terms of school months. For example, in this study a composite index has been calculated for each dependent measure - word recognition accuracy - on words in isolation and in context; and comprehension - number of ideas present in uncued recall, and cued recall scores.

Reading level. An estimate of the reading skills of a student, usually termed Independent, Instructional or Frustration (Harris & Hodges, 1981).

Independent reading level. The readability or grade level of material that the student can read fluently with few word attack problems and high comprehension (Harris & Hodges, 1981). For the purposes of this study the following criteria was used in determining level: word recognition must be 99 percent or above and cued comprehension performance, 90 percent or above (Betts, 1957).

Instructional reading level. The readability or grade level of material that is challenging, but not frustrating for the student to read successfully with normal classroom instruction and support (Harris & Hodges, 1981). The criteria used in this study were word recognition, 95 percent or above; and comprehension, 75 percent or above (Betts, 1957).

Frustration reading level. The readability or grade level of material that is too difficult to be read successfully by a student, even with normal classroom instruction and support. The student's word recognition is 90 percent or below and comprehension falls to less than 50 percent (Betts, 1957).

Field notes. This term refers to the notes kept by the researcher. They include comments made by the parents, the children, the classroom teachers and resource specialists, the principal and the vice-principal.

Regrounding. Is a measure used to validate the findings of a study by repeated searches through the data in order to identify generalizations (Kamil et al, 1985).

Assumptions

Underlying the study are several assumptions:

1. Independent levels of reading can be identified through the administration of an IRI.
2. Based on studies by Durkin (1966) and Teale (1984) that stress the importance of reading to preschoolers to enhance future reading success, this study assumes that reading with older children will result in increased reading achievement. Reed (1988) shares the belief that reading aloud to preschool children is advantageous and advocates continuing read-aloud sessions with all children, including adolescents.
3. Children learn faster when individual attention is given and when they can practice their craft on a daily basis.
4. Reading to children everyday using various reading techniques will improve their word recognition and comprehension.
5. Parents will use the techniques modeled in class at home when they read to their children.

Organization of the Report

Chapter 1 delineates the area of concern. The historical background and research involving parent involvement and the importance of storybook reading is reviewed in Chapter 2. Study methodology and procedures are reported in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 consists of an analysis of the data with appropriate tables. Chapter 5 contains a summary of the research, conclusions, implications for instruction, and recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter examines the literature related to the study. The first section reviews the relationship between home environment and young children's literacy development, while the second discusses storybook reading as a routine for language development. The next segment deals with parents as reading models and their commitment in terms of helping their children become literate. Finally the literature is summarized, providing a rationale for the study.

Home Environment

As early as the beginning of the century, the importance of home environment and parental support in reading acquisition was made public in a statement by Huey (1908, 1961, p.19):

> The home is the natural place for learning to read in connection with the child's introduction to literature through story-telling, picture reading, etc. The child will make use of reading and writing in his play using both pictures and words.

What is interesting is not only that Huey singled out naturally-occurring, shared events such as storytelling and picture discussion as being conducive to future reading development, but also that he highlighted how this kind of modeling transfers to the child's play. From an early age children pattern their reading behaviour after that of their parents they observe them reading and writing. To such children, reading is not something artificial, but something that serves a real purpose.

Interest in the role that the family plays in laying the foundation for literacy has been rekindled in the current generation. After examining the kinds of models that have been implicit or explicit in studies of family interaction, Leichter (1984) concluded that families influence literacy development in three ways. Through:

1. Interpersonal interactions, which consist of the literacy experiences shared with a child by parents, siblings, and other individuals in the home;
2. The literacy environment, which include newspapers, children's books, paper and pencils and other materials available in the home; and
3. Supportive emotional and motivational climate as represented by the relationships among family members, especially as reflected in parental attitudes and aspirations for their children's literacy achievement.

Although they did not use these exact terms, Schieffelin and Cochrane-Smith (1984) appear to have used the same criteria in terms of interpersonal interaction, literacy environment and emotional and motivational climate in evaluating the home environments of three families: (a) a Philadelphia middle-class family; (b) a family in a traditionally nonliterate society in Papua, New Guinea, and (c) a Chinese family from Vietnam, who had recently settled in Philadelphia. Data consisted of field notes and family interviews. The investigators documented any literacy-related activities they observed over a period of eighteen months. Literacy events included book-reading, transcription of children's stories, reading environmental print, and discussions between adults and children.

The Philadelphia middle-class family was found to take literacy for granted. This family seemed to assume that their children's interest in print emerged "naturally" as part of normal, routine development. In this society, books were treated as valuable treasures. Reading took place frequently between children and adults, adults alone, and children alone. In addition, the children had an abundant supply of writing materials both at home and in nursery school.

The investigators contend, however, that the children's knowledge of print did not emerge naturally. Instead they suggest that the children were socialized into becoming literate. The adults acted as models and instructors in

helping their children understand print and how it could be used. If Leichter's (1984) model were to be applied in evaluating the literacy climate in this society, the middle-class parents met all three of her criteria regarding family influences on literacy development through their interpersonal interactions, and the provision of both a supportive emotional climate and appropriate materials for reading.

In contrast, the family representing the society of Papua, New Guinea, was nonliterate. The adults in this culture saw no purpose for reading and writing in their day to day living since all of their interactions were face to face, and therefore oral. Some adults did receive instruction in literacy, but only because they wanted to be converted to Christianity. There were no books present in the homes except those provided by the church. Children were not consciously encouraged to become literate.

In the case studied, a young mother was taking lessons in reading, and her young daughter became interested in the mother's book. Soon, Meli, the daughter, wanted to look at the book with her mother and they began to interact in a joint book-related activity. The interactions began simply as naming or picture labeling, with the print being ignored. What is interesting is that these kinds of interactions are not typical in this society. The form of the interactions did, however, resemble the form of activities carried out by educated mothers and fathers with their similarly aged

children in the United States. These interactions nevertheless did not share the functions nor have the meaning that the interactions had for the learning-oriented Philadelphian participants.

The authors note that all of the naming interactions were initiated by Meli, the daughter. While they acknowledge that the book-looking activities did have a positive effect on the language use of the participants, the mother tried to discourage her daughter because she did not see the value of the activity. The child persisted, and the mother cooperated almost against her will. Meli was participating in preliterate activities as a result of her own interest and curiosity about books and language.

According to Leichter's (1984) model, the only influence on the daughter, Meli, was the interpersonal interaction between mother and daughter. There were no storybooks in the home and the mother did not seem to appreciate the importance of her daughter's initiative. Follow-up would be required to discover whether Meli actually learned to be literate as a result of the picture discussions.

In the last case, the Vietnamese family, the home environment was a reversal of what is normally seen in middle class North America. Here the children were the readers and writers since their parents were not fluent in English. It was the children who filled in forms, acting as translators and mediators for their parents. There was no evidence of

early parent-child book reading or later casual reading by the school aged children. The children could not rely on their parents to help them with school-based tasks so they developed a network of contacts outside the immediate family. This network was made up of adults they met through their church or community. Nonetheless, the children still sought and received adult support and guidance, even though they had to look outside the family.

In the Vietnamese society, the three foundational elements of interpersonal interaction, literacy environment and a supportive emotional and motivational climate (Leichter, 1984) were met in a non-traditional way. Although no book sharing was observed between parents and children, letters from family members in the home country were read and shared. The children's knowledge of the importance of literacy was fostered through the letters and the functional need to read and write.

Summary

Three themes emerge from these case studies. One is that literacy will develop when it is functional, relevant and meaningful both for individuals and the society in which they live. The second is that adult support and modeling is necessary. Third, the children, themselves, must want to become literate. Calkins (1986) echoes these sentiments by stating: "Learning isn't something we can do for our

students. Learning requires an act of initiative on their part. We can only create conditions in which learning can happen" (p.265).

The best conditions in the home or in school won't help those children who do not, themselves, see a purpose for reading and writing. Generally those children who have parents who support them in becoming literate are the children who have the greatest success in school (Leichter, 1984; Schieffelin & Cochrane-Smith, 1984). Accordingly, the importance of involving the parents in their children's literacy development becomes very important, as does the type of involvement. Many parents, however, may feel inadequate about helping their children. An instructional program for parents may be of benefit so parents would not have to rely on how they were taught or on "hit and miss" intervention.

Other studies are more specific regarding the role that parents play in their children's literacy development. Burns and Collins (1987) investigated the differences in the home experiences of intellectually superior nonreaders and intellectually superior accelerated readers. The subjects were four and five year olds and the data were gathered through a 269 item parental questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to assess the home environment both with respect to the presence of printed materials and variety of literacy experiences provided. Among the questions were items that elicited information regarding the children's concepts about

print (ability to distinguish between letters and words), use of invented spelling and aptitude for story retelling, as well as the amount of print in the environment.

Based on these parental reports, Burns and Collins (1987, p. 244) concluded that:

> accelerated readers had been provided certain types of experiences to a greater extent than non-readers. Opportunities that allowed children to interact directly with specific concepts related to words (eg letter names, letter sounds, letter-sound correspondences, words, sentences) and allowed them to interact directly with words/pictures during story reading episodes appeared to be more directly associated with accelerated reading abilities ... .

Teale (1984) found, in studying families where book-reading activities were common occurrences, that the types of parent-child interactions, including the quality of reading, were more important than the quantity of material read. Teale suggests that the relationship between being read to and literacy development is not as clear as was once assumed. There are many ways to "read" to a child. According to Teale, higher-order interactions involving questions help to "model" for the child that reading can be enjoyable, thus fostering

positive reading attitudes. Teale suggests that parents need both to focus the child's attention on the relationship between the spoken and written words and to promote the child's understanding of the materials that are read aloud.

The importance of the interaction between the adult and the child was further proved by Woodward and Serebrin (1989). These investigators studied the social semiotics of storyreading in a case study involving a three year old and his father in a home setting. The child selected the reading materials. Over a period of 20 weeks, they audio and video-taped daily storyreading sessions, selecting three that were indicative of the types of interactions that had taken place.

An analysis of these interactions showed that the father was not the sole dispenser of knowledge. While reading a book about dinosaurs, the child insisted that people lived during those times. By re-reading the passage the father attempted to show the child that people did not live then. The child persisted because his schemata included books that showed cavemen interacting with dinosaurs, and at his nursery school when discussing fossils, a guest speaker had brought in plastic dinosaurs and cavemen. What the child brought to the sessions was his interpretation of the story. The father, although not agreeing with his child, did nevertheless have to accept the child's interpretation. The authors concluded that "collaboration between readers involves a complex relationship in which differences in interpretation function

as resources for enriching both readers' understandings" (p.401).

Woodward and Serebrin (1989) further observed that the conversations that took place between the father and his child were not just limited to the text. They allowed both of the participants to create new meanings, share connections and questions, and formulate tentative hypotheses on a continuous basis. These discussions clarified and augmented the child's understanding of the world.

Letter/Sound Knowledge

In addition to general world knowledge, Mason (1980) found that children who had been read to began to extrapolate some of the critical relationships between symbols and their sounds. Mason observed 38 four year olds, over a period of nine months, while they attended a university operated preschool. The children were from middle and upper-middle income two parent families. The children's parents were asked to fill out questionnaires in which they described: (a) their child's interest in and knowledge about letters and sounds, and (b) the role they, as parents, played in helping their children learn to read. At the preschool, several tests were administered to measure the children's knowledge of letters and words and to discover the types of strategies that the children used to learn, remember and spell words. Mason found similar parental interactions in the homes of early readers.

These included: answering children's questions, pointing out and quizzing children about signs, rereading alphabet books and stories, helping children spell and print words, and coaching them in the identification of letters and words. Thus Mason concluded that parents helped considerably in furthering their children's literacy success.

While Mason attempted to identify the characteristics common to the homes of the children in her study as they related to "book" knowledge, especially concerning knowledge of the forms of print, other researchers have studied the home environments of children who learn to read without such formalized instruction. Clark (1976); Durkin (1966); Holdaway (1979); Morrow (1983) and Teale, (1978) identified characteristics common to the homes of early readers that seem to sum up the foregoing. Such children have parents who: (a) read to their children, help them with writing and reading, and are readers themselves. (b) furnish a wide variety of reading materials including novels, magazines, newspapers, and work-related information. (c) value and enjoy books which are associated with pleasure, and (d) provide a setting where interactions between adults and children are socially, emotionally, and intellectually conducive to literacy interest and growth. When parents provide a rich literacy environment at home, then teaching reading and writing becomes easier for both the teacher and the child (Morrow, 1989).

The significance of having the child and parent interact in storyreading is echoed by Teale (1987). Based on a literature review of storybook reading interactions. He concluded that the child never encounters a simple oral rendering of a text in a storybook reading situation. Instead the words of the author are surrounded by the language of the adult reader and the child. Thus storybook reading is "characteristically a socially created activity" (p.60). Children demand to have their favourite books re-read and it is this repetition that allows them to construct their own story. The same story read over and over changes as the participants gain new insights and it is this social interaction that allows children to learn about literacy.

The concept of reading as a socially created activity was researched by Heath (1986). She studied three different communities, "Mainstream", "Roadville" and "Trackton", which differed in their social approach to storybook reading. She found that the social interactions between children and adults as they pertain to book sharing appear to make the greatest difference in children's success once they begin school.

In the "Mainstream" community the children are expected to develop habits and values that make them members of the "literate community". The bedtime story is a major literacy event that helps set the patterns of behaviour that repeat themselves over and over throughout the children's lifetime. Thus children are socialized to be literate, just as

Shieffelin and Cochrane-Smith (1984) found in their study of middle-class Philadelphia families reported on earlier in this review. In "Mainstream" homes, children learn how to respond to the "initiation-reply-evaluation sequences" (p.99) that are so prevalent in our school systems. Children learn how to obtain meaning from books, but through interaction with others they also learn how to talk about and discuss ideas.

In contrast, in the "Roadville" community, a white working-class neighbourhood, children are exposed to all of the right stimuli - they have their own books, and parents talk to them and read to them, but the types of interactions are different from the "Mainstream" society. In "Roadville" children are read to usually before naps and at bedtime. Stories are modified, however, if the parents feel they are too hard. Most of the parent-child interactions consist of labelling the items in the book. By the time the children are 3 1/2, they are restrained from participating in the reading of the story and are told not to interrupt and to sit and listen quietly to the story. Children are not encouraged to move their understanding of books into other situational contexts or to apply book knowledge to their general knowledge of the world about them. "Roadville" adults do not try to make links between what is happening in the real world to what they read about in books. When these children enter school, they perform well in the first three grades but start to fall behind when they begin activities that are considered more

advanced and require more independence. They do not seem able to keep up or seek help once the importance and frequency of questions and reading habits with which they are familiar, begin to decline.

In the third community, "Trackton", Heath discovered that the environment is "atypical" compared to the "Mainstream" and "Roadville" communities. Although "Trackton" children are involved in an almost "totally human world", and in the midst of constant human communication, verbal and nonverbal, they are, for the most part, ignored by their parents. The babbling of the babies is referred to by the adults as "noise". No attempt is made to interpret and respond to these sounds or words. By the time children reach pre-school age, they are asked analogical questions that call for nonspecific comparisons of one item, event or person with another. They are not, however, asked for "what-explanations" of their environment. "Trackton" adults do not:

> separate out the elements of the environment around their children, they do not simplify their language, focus on single-word utterances by young children, label items or features of objects in either books or the environment at large... . Children must themselves select, practice and determine rules of production and structuring. (p. 117)

When "Trackton" children enter school, they are faced with answering questions that ask for the "what-explanations". They are asked as individuals to identify and label. These children tend to volunteer information about something that happened to them in real-life, but these are not the types of answers that teachers want. "Trackton" children do not adopt the social-interactional rules of school literacy events:

> By the time their school career calls for the types of comparison-contrast situations that they are familiar with it is too late for them. They have not picked up the composition and comprehension skills that they need to translate their analogical skills into a channel teachers can accept. (p. 118)

The theme that emerges from these studies is that in order for their children to be successful in school, parents have to pattern their adult-child interactions after those typically found in mainstream schools. It is the interaction between the parent and the child that is more important than the simple act of reading a storybook.

Summary

A rich literacy environment at home gives children a better chance to ease into reading easily and naturally (Mason, 1980; Morrow, 1989; Schieffelin & Cochrane-Smith, 1984). In addition to providing a literate environment, parents must be actively involved in their children's prereading development (Burns & Collins, 1987; Leichter, 1984; Schieffelin & Cochrane-Smith, 1984). When reading is viewed as a pleasurable activity by both parents and children, then literate behaviour becomes part of the "natural" development of children (Teale, 1978). Parents who provide an environment that is conducive to literacy also provide social and emotional support for literacy development and school success (Heath, 1986).

Storybook Reading as a Routine For Language Development

Just as daily routines such as eating, bathing and getting dressed are ideal contexts for fostering language acquisition (Bruner, 1976), reading stories is a routine that enhances language development. Children want their favourite books read over and over, but more importantly, in storybook sharing, the adult utterances reoccur at predictable points. Book reading as a routine, therefore, is highly conducive to developing children's competence as language users (McIntire & Zakaluk, 1985).

The importance of storybook reading was documented by Feitelson and her colleagues (1986) in their study of kindergarten children. Four groups of children in low SES (socio-economic status) kindergartens in two towns in Israel were read to three times a week for four months. Matched children in control groups in the same kindergartens engaged in group games on the same days for the same length of time. Comprehension was assessed by reading a first-grade story to each child and having the child respond to oral questions about the story. In addition, children were shown two illustrations from a picture story and asked to tell a story about them.

Results showed that Israeli kindergarten children, who were considered disadvantaged because their parents did not read to them daily, made measurable gains after being in the experimental program for four months. This group outscored children in a control group (those who had not been read to) on measures of decoding, reading comprehension, and active use of language. Children who had not been read to regularly seemed to experience difficulty in school and fell behind in reading by the middle elementary grades.

These findings confirm Heath's (1986) research. Feitelson hypothesizes that perhaps being read to daily as preschoolers develops appropriate attitudes toward reading which in turn leads to the development of abilities and skills beyond decoding-related insights. Reading books to children

can help enrich vocabulary, background knowledge, and the ability to comprehend. Since children who have been read to are familiar with the reading process, have expanded experiences, and knowledge of reading-related terminology, such children are better able to relate to and profit from early instruction.

The results of this study point to a relatively simple, inexpensive, yet seemingly effective way to improve children's performance and foster positive attitudes toward reading. Children in the study increased their attention span, comprehension, vocabulary, background knowledge and familiarity with story structure.

These authors suggest, however, that children who have not been read to before school may still benefit from an extensive reading program once they attend. To prove their hypothesis, they investigated the effects of having teachers read a serialized story twenty minutes every day for six months to first grade children who had not been exposed to reading at home. Matched children in control groups did not receive any extra reading beyond what is normally carried out in the grade one rooms. Teachers in control classes continued to read a story only on Fridays as they had done before. Findings point to the importance of daily reading in terms of language development, increased comprehension, and a desire to learn to read, literacy qualities not matched by control classes.

Another storybook reading study involved 2-4 year olds in a privately operated day care in a middle-class neighbourhood in a suburb of a large midwestern city (Sulzby, 1985). Interviewers visited the children over a period of three months and interviewed the children individually about their knowledge regarding written language before and after storybook reading sessions. For each session, children were audiotaped reading two storybooks each. Sulzby was interested in determining how children read to themselves and the role that modeling plays. She stated that "long before the child is examining the print while reading, the child's orally-produced "reading attempts" often contain features of written language which are not in the written text itself" (p.460).

As a result of her study, Sulzby identified a storybook reading progression. She suggests that children appear to progress from treating individual pages of storybooks as if they were discrete units, to treating the book as the unit, using language that resembles book language, both in form and tone, and building a story across the book's pages. Sulzby noted that before becoming highly "written" or literate in nature, the child's bookreading language is characteristic of either oral or written language initially, with some fluctuation between the two. Characteristics that she identified in children's storybook reading speech include: (a) wording that is more appropriate for written rather than oral language; and (b) intonation patterns that sound like

reading rather than conversing or storytelling.

Sulzby concluded that children seem to acquire information about written language across the years while being read to: "When reading a book to young children, parents typically use highly interactive language, particularly when the book is new to the child" (p.30). As children become familiar with the book, the interactions become less interactive, and the child spends more time listening to the text. In addition to allowing the adult to read larger portions of the text, the children she studied began to read larger segments of books independently.

While critics suggest that not all children advance through the identified developmental stages in exactly this step by step fashion, Sulzby's work nonetheless serves as a framework for interpreting children's book reading behaviours and suggest how one might help support and sustain even children's earliest bookreading efforts. Documenting the emergence of "book talk" language as significant to literacy development is also important to our understanding of literary acquisition.

Purcell-Gates (1988) replicated Sulzby's 1985 research and applied it to a wider-range of print than storybooks. She wanted to see if the child's abstraction of knowledge during the learning-to-read process could be generalized to new situations, such as the processing of novel-text. Her purpose was to discover if the experienced book reading group

had greater knowledge of the syntactical and lexical features of language. She compared kindergarten children and second graders who had been read to with a control group of children who lacked extensive preschool reading experiences, hypothesizing that parents who read to their children speak to them in more elaborated forms, both syntactically and semantically.

This study sought to determine if well-read-to children begin formal instruction in reading and writing with a linguistic knowledge of the lexical and syntactic features typical of written narrative. The goal was to identify this written-narrative register in the oral language of preliterate children and to describe it. Children were asked to: (a) tell the author about their most recent birthday, or another significant event in the family; and (b) read a wordless picture book. Each child's language samples were transcribed and compared within subject for significant differences among sixteen different lexical and syntactic features found to differentiate oral and written narrative in previous research. The findings established that children who are read to, upon entering school, bring with them certain knowledge about sentence-level lexical and syntactic forms of written language which facilitates literary acquisition.

Another study which supports the value of providing storybook experiences at the preschool level was carried out by Pappas and Brown (1987). They argued that an essential

factor in becoming literate is developing an understanding of written language registers. In order to explore what might be involved in this process, they examined the reading-like behaviour of a young pre-reading kindergarten student. "Pretend readings" of a picture storybook previously read to the child were analyzed in terms of the degree to which they were approximations, ambiguities or extrapolations from the original text. Retelling patterns across the three readings reflected the ways the child attempted to understand the story and documented the kinds of strategies the child used to acquire familiarity with the register of a conventionally written story.

Pappas and Brown concluded that children's early readings of favourite storybooks can not be explained as simply rote memorization. The comprehension of written language appears to be just as much a constructive process as is evident in other areas of children's cognitive/linguistic development. They suggest that the route young prereaders travel in obtaining meaning from storybooks is characterized by various kinds of approximations and overextensions. Being read to seems to be a necessary condition upon which other experiences build and extend. Pappas and Brown noted further that reading the same story over and over to children and having children practice retelling the story by themselves is most beneficial to language development.

Another study which supports the language development value of reconstructing storylines of favourite books was carried out by Thomas (1985). She studied fifteen early readers by interviewing parents about reading-related home practices. She also interviewed a similar number of parents of nonearly readers matched for IQ scores, socioeconomic status and age. She found that while read-aloud sessions had occurred in the homes of both early readers and nonearly readers, the frequency with which these episodes occurred was notably higher in the homes of early readers. She concluded that the multiple read-aloud episodes in the lives of early readers account in large part for a characteristic present in nearly every early reader but not in nonearly readers, namely the ability to memorize favourite stories. This memorizing stage that all early readers seemed to go through appeared to be very important to early reading acquisition.

As long ago as 1966, Durkin in her study of children who read early found that storybook readings had a positive effect on children becoming readers. The children started out by "memorizing" their favourite books then moved into recognizing the print and finally to reading the words for themselves. Thus reading and re-reading favourite books is beneficial not only for language development but also for internalising the forms of print. Re-reading the same book again is also important to making sense of the world.

Martinez and Roser (1985) examined the effects of repeated readings on young children's responses to literature. Martinez (1983) in an earlier study determined that children's responses to storybooks changed as they became more familiar with the story. This conclusion led Martinez and Roser to investigate how children's response to literature changed with increasing story familiarity. Case studies were conducted in both homes and in preschools. The home studies focused on four preschool children, ranging in age from 4 to 5, and their parents. The school studies focused on the interaction of two groups of 4 year olds with their nursery school teachers.

Books were chosen based on the children's unfamiliarity with the selections. Storytime sessions were audiotaped both at home and at nursery school by the adults. The taped sessions were analyzed to determine the difference in responses based on familiarity, or lack of it, with stories. The participants' talk was classified according to:
(a) form - whether the talk was a question, comment or answer; and (b) focus - whether the talk was directed toward the story's title, characters, events, details, setting, language or theme.

Martinez and Roser found that: (a) children both talked more and the form of talk shifted when the story was familiar, (b) the children's talk tended to focus on different aspects of the story as it was read again, and (c) when the story was read repeatedly, the children's responses indicated

greater depth of understanding.

These findings confirm the value of reading and re-reading the same story to enhance not only language and literacy learning but also meaning making. Martinez and Roser point out that repetition does not mean repetitious. While the same storybook is read over and over, the interaction is different with each reading. This also supports Teale's (1984) findings that the interaction between the parent and child is more important than only book reading itself. The construction of meaning that takes place between the adult and the child cannot be overlooked. Storybook reading is perhaps the best activity for allowing the type of interaction between adult and child that is needed to foster literacy. Children are given the opportunity to explore constructing their own story, based on the framework of a familiar book.

Summary

Storybook reading is an important part of the literacy development of preschool children (Morrow, 1989; Pappas & Brown, 1987; Purcell-Gates, 1988; Sulzby, 1985). The benefits of storybook reading include the development of "book language", vocabulary, background knowledge, increased comprehension and positive reading attitudes (Pappas & Brown, 1987; Purcell-Gates, 1988; Sulzby, 1985; Teale, 1986). Children who have been read to on a regular basis acquire book related knowledge before they begin formal schooling. Perhaps

more importantly, they have developed positive attitudes toward reading (Feitelson et al, 1986). Nonetheless, the authors observed that for children who have not been read to at home, intensive storybook reading at the kindergarten level is still helpful.

When young children are read storybooks over and over, they frequently and independently reenact or pretend to read their favourite book (Pappas & Brown, 1987). These "pretend readings" allow children to construct their own meanings about the text and provides them with a sense of story (Durkin, 1966; Pappas & Brown, 1987; Thomas, 1985).

Teachers often take for granted that parents know "how" to read to their children. Even the most educated parents may feel ill-equipped to deal with the prospect of helping their children when it comes to learning to read. The foregoing review suggests that if parents were taught how to read to children they might be more comfortable with reading and would take a more active role in helping their children become readers. For these reasons the role of the parent cannot be over stressed when it comes to children achieving literacy through repeated storybook readings.

Parents as Reading Models

As was previously stated, parents who are actively involved reading to their children enhance the children's literacy development (Burns & Collins, 1987; Leichter, 1984;

Schieffelin & Cochrane-Smith, 1984). Yet it was not too many years ago that parents were "directed to leave the teaching of reading to teachers" (Vukelich, 1984). Since that time, educators have come to realize the important role that parents play in literacy development even before their children enter school. Parental involvement should continue throughout the school years. The question remains how to involve parents more actively in their children's reading development. What is the best way for parents to enhance their children's literacy?

As this review suggests the quality of the verbal interactions between adults and children during story readings, normally one to one, has a positive influence on the literacy development of children (Schieffelin & Cochrane-Smith, 1984; Flood, 1977). In particular,

> Research on home storybook reading has identified a number of interactive behaviours that affect the quality of read-aloud activities. These behaviours include: questioning, scaffolding (modeling dialogue and responses), praising, offering information, directing discussion, sharing personal reactions, and relating concepts to life experiences. Many parents engage their children in such interactive behaviour rather naturally. (Morrow, 1989 p. 89)

Interactions between parents and children in storybook reading are characterized by episodes which Bruner (1978) calls "scaffolding". In Bruner's model, beginning readers learn to interpret and make sense of the story based on parental interactions. The parents extend the story outside of the book, bringing in the children's own similar experiences to help bridge the known to the unknown. It is these interactions that allow children to build on and develop their own skills so that they can eventually carry out similar tasks without external support (Langer, 1983).

Thomas (1985) studied fifteen early readers by interviewing their parents about their children's early reading behaviours, finding that parents of early readers structured scaffolding dialogues by constructing prereading, during reading and postreading questions. She hypothesized that it was due to this structured reading that children became aware of the meaning of the printed word. Parents reported that as the children progressed and became better readers, more and more of the pre and during reading questions were generated by the children themselves. Thus the children's behaviour had been modeled for them by their parents. She found, in contrast, that some early nonreaders in the study who were matched for IQ scores, socioeconomic status and age, also initiated questions, but not to the same degree as the early readers.

The results of a study by Flood (1977) also support the value of specific and systematic questioning by parents while reading aloud to their children. Flood set out to investigate the relationship between parental reading style and the child's performance on selected prereading tasks. He selected thirty-six 3 1/2 and 4 1/2 year old children attending seven different preschools, representing four ethnic groups and three socioeconomic levels. Parents were visited at home and asked to read to their children as they usually do. These sessions were audio-taped. Children were then asked to complete several tasks, representing five skill areas which are believed to be related to later reading success: alphabet recognition, visual discrimination, vocabulary, and the recognition and reproduction of geometric shapes. Performance on ten separate tasks was factor analyzed and a composite prereading score generated for each subject.

Flood concluded that the style of reading to children, not the book, is far more important. More than the presence of print and more than just reading to the children, early literacy depends upon the "how" and the "what" that surrounds the print environment. The best way to prepare a young child for reading is to read aloud best-loved stories over and over again. He suggested a cyclical model, involving four steps for the most effective results. These include: (a) preparing the child for reading - through what he calls warm-up questions; (b) actively involving children in the reading

process by asking and answering questions as they relate both to the content of the story and to the child's past experiences; (c) providing positive reinforcement for children's efforts; and (d) asking post story evaluative questions, thereby bringing the story to closure and completing the cycle. The latter helps the child learn how to evaluate, assess and integrate new knowledge. It is through the questioning process that children become actively involved. Children need to be involved in the story from beginning to end for the most benefits in terms of enhancing literacy development.

Teale's work (1987) verifies this contention. He contends that children almost never encounter a simple oral rendering of a text in a storybook reading situation. Instead the words of the author are surrounded by the language of the adult reader and the child. Thus storybook reading is "characteristically a socially created activity." (p.60) The importance that the adult reader plays in this cooperative reading process underscores the value of having parents read storybooks to their children.

Other researchers have also noted that reading of storybooks correlates highly with children's success in school (Chomsky, 1972). Applebee's (1978) research expanded to include children's awareness of story structure and meaning as well as their requests for information during the act of storybook reading. Applebee found the stories children hear

help them acquire expectations about what the world is like, as well as vocabulary and knowledge about language, people and places. Applebee hypothesizes that while children learn about stories from adults, they also begin to imitate the conventions of stories. The extent to which written story conventions are recognized and used by children can be taken as an indication of their recognition that stories are different in form from other uses of language. This knowledge of story structure serves them well in school and helps them not only understand and remember stories, but also write their own imaginative tales.

Martinez (1983) suggests that: "children's responses to literature [that] they listen to may provide insight into how children think about the information they encounter in books" (p. 208). Modeling by the parent played a large role in the literacy learning of the four and a half year old that Martinez observed sharing picture books with her father over a four month period. Sessions were audio-taped by the parent three times a week and involved both books the child was familiar with and books which were unfamiliar.

The author was interested in the types of interaction that enhanced the young child's story comprehension. She concluded that repeated experiences with the same story were important. The child often said nothing during the initial reading, but in subsequent readings began to model her father's way of thinking and responding to the story. "When

her father [focused] on a particular story element, which [might] be a word, detail, or an event, Maria Dolores often [wanted] to talk about the same element in later readings" (p.207). This observation suggests that modeling by the parent is crucial in helping children think about the information they encounter in books.

As suggested earlier, some parents know instinctively how to interact with their children while reading. They encourage them to read even when they are in school and remain actively involved with their children's reading growth in order to promote intellectual development. These, it is hypothesized, are the children who are most successful academically (Chomsky, 1972; Applebee, 1978).

It follows that perhaps parents of children who are not achieving in school could give their children more guidance and support which would lead ultimately to enhanced academic performance. Many parents, however, need the direction and the encouragement of the school in order to know what to do.

Wahl (1988) argues that parents do not need to focus on specific reading skills to perform their role as reading teachers. She contends that parents can provide informal learning experiences that foster an interest in and love for reading. The parents' role in supporting development, however, requires patience. Parents need to create a supportive environment that will encourage their children to experiment with language.

Summary

How parents interact with their children during storybook readings is more important than the quantity of materials read (Flood, 1977; Ninio & Bruner, 1978; Teale, 1987; Thomas, 1985). Studies of early readers reveal that the adults in their lives tended to be responsive to their interest in literacy activities. Parents structured the reading to include questions - before, during and after storybook reading (Ninio & Bruner, 1978). As the children progressed, they assumed more and more responsibility for the questioning that had been modeled by their parents (Martinez, 1983). Flood (1977) supported these questioning techniques and suggested that early literacy depends on the "how" and "what" that goes on during reading. Smith (1988) stated that most parents need to be given some direction in order to know what to do. On the other hand, Wahl (1988) recommends that rather than teach specific reading skills, parents provide informal learning experiences that foster an interest in and love for reading.

What seems important is that the parents of successful readers were concerned enough about helping their children become literate that they were willing to help with reading when it was needed, in the way in which it was needed. Through interacting with their children during storybook reading, parents are in the best position to satisfy their children's reading needs. Parents who read to their children

are in effect conducting individualized instruction in reading. The type of instruction in which parents engage should not be thought of in terms of formal teaching, but rather as following the leads of the child.

Summary and Conclusions

The importance of home environment in fostering literacy development has been well documented (Mason, 1980; Schieffelin & Cochrane-Smith, 1984). It has been further shown that parents of early readers acted as models and instructors in helping their children understand print and how it could be used. Adults can help children make the transition from listening to stories to reading stories for themselves a rewarding experience by providing them with a rich literacy environment.

Shared book reading activities have proven to be very important in young children's literacy achievement (Feitelson et al, 1986; Pappas & Brown, 1987; Purcell & Gates, 1988; Sulzby, 1985; Thomas, 1985). Reading to children helps develop positive attitudes about reading which can lead to the extension of skills and abilities beyond decoding-related knowledge. Reading books to children can help enrich their knowledge of "book language", vocabulary, background knowledge, and ability to understand the world.

The contribution of adults in children's literacy development cannot be over stressed. Parents who interact with their children when reading by modeling and asking questions contribute to the "how" and "what" of reading (Flood, 1977; Thomas, 1985). Nevertheless many parents require direction if they are to become instrumental in fostering their children's reading growth (Smith, 1988).

Telling parents of low-achieving readers to go home and read to their children everyday, without providing reasons and a means to do so, is unrealistic. Educators often assume that all parents intuitively know what is involved in reading a book to their children. This is not the case. This investigator contends that the most benefits for the child will occur if parents are given instruction in: (a) preparing the child for reading the storybook; (b) setting a purpose for reading; (c) responding appropriately to the child; (d) practicing reading and (e) making the experience positive with praise being offered to the child for his/her efforts and close approximations to the printed word.

Summary of the Research

In this chapter three major areas were explored to provide a rationale for the present investigation. First, the importance of home environment was explored with regard to literacy acquisition. Second, the value of shared reading activities was explored, particularly the benefits of repeated

readings and questioning for developing "book language" and sense of story (Applebee, 1978). Third, the role that parents or other adults play in helping children achieve literacy was explored. It appears that the children of supportive parents are the children who have the greatest success in schools (Durkin, 1974; Goodman, 1984; Mason, 1980; Purcell-Gates, 1988; Schieffelin & Cochrane-Smith, 1984; Sulzby, 1985; and Teale, 1984).

Program Elements

The present investigation builds on the findings of storybook reading and parental involvement research. The study examines whether or not storybook reading will help school-aged children become better readers and if teaching their parents how to interact while reading makes a difference in their children's reading achievement. It also examines whether or not reading whole text, versus segmented text, in a one to one setting, will benefit those children who are currently receiving specialized remedial reading help at school. In many current remedial reading programs mastery of skills, taught in isolation, is stressed.

Since the parent is the child's first teacher it makes sense to suggest that they are the ones who are best equipped to help their school-aged children discover the pleasure that reading can bring. Children who are anxious about reading are children at risk. Children need to feel comfortable and

secure while learning to become literate. Butler and Clay (1979) state that:

> supportive parents can give a child who is found to be having real difficulties the help needed. A parent who is in tune with his or her child's way of learning, who is prepared to be patient and interested without being anxious or judging, can be the very person to give the individual time and attention that a child needs. (p.15)

Doak (1986) maintains that parents have always been actively encouraged to facilitate the oral language development of their preschool children but they have been "actively discouraged, by teacher's in particular, from promoting the reading development of their school-age children" (p.2) The reasoning behind this thinking is that teachers are in the best position to teach children to read since they are trained in the instructional strategies that children need to become successful readers.

Meek (1982) argues that teachers have to make use of what parents know about their child and be actively involved in the reading program to ensure literacy learning for school-aged children. He goes on to say that the role of the parent is different from the role of the teacher. The parent has to

foster the notion that reading is an enjoyable activity and that success is possible.

Previous studies dealt only with preschoolers and their parents and are based on data that was collected from parents interacting with their preschoolers in an informal way at home. The investigators did not attempt to change or alter these interactions. The intent of this investigation is to: (a) work with parents of school-aged children identified as low-achievers in terms of their reading performance; and (b) alter the types of interactions that the parents have with their children in book sharing sessions. The parents in this study were coached regarding strategies to use to foster more parent-child interactions during story reading.

Chapter 3

PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of teaching parents selected reading strategies to use while reading with their children at home on the reading performance of their low-achieving school-aged children in terms of word recognition and comprehension. In addition, information regarding attitude was obtained through:

1. pre and post program questionnaires for students;
2. pre and post program questionnaires for parents;
3. parent-child interactions - three, at home audio-taped sessions to determine the number of questions initiated by: (a) the students before, during and after reading; (b) the parents before, during and after reading.

This chapter is concerned primarily with delineating the procedures used in data gathering. First, the population is described while an explanation of materials and approaches to both teaching and testing follows. Information regarding instrument-scoring is presented next. The chapter concludes with an account of how data were analyzed.

Method

Parent Subjects

Fourteen parents participated in the parent workshops. The socio-economic profile of the school community is predominantly middle class. The parent group was made up of thirteen mothers and one father, although on three separate occasions two other fathers joined the sessions. Even though the other parent did not attend the classes, participants expected them to be actively involved in reading with their children at home. The participants attending the sessions represented both single and two parent families, as well as mothers who worked outside the home and mothers who did not work outside the home. In all but one case, English was the first language of the home.

The 14 parent subjects were selected by the learning assistance department of the school according to the following criteria. Their children: (a) must have been referred by the learning specialist; (b) were in grades 1 to 4; and (c) did not have any serious physical or emotional problems that interfered with their learning to read. Parents who met the criteria were invited by letter to participate in the parent program. (See Appendix C.)

The parent attendance record is presented in Table 3.1. The parent of subject 1 only attended one-half of the classes due to conflicts with work schedules. Yet, the parent continued to read daily and made an effort to find out what

had been covered in the missed classes. The parent of subject 5 also missed several classes, although her parents continued daily read-alouds and telephoned to keep informed regarding strategies that had been missed.

Table 3.1

Subject Number and Class Attendance Rate.

Subject	Attendance	Subject	Attendance
1	4	8	7
2	8	9	7
3	7	10	7
4	8	11	7
5	5	12	7
6	7	13	7
7	7	14	7

Note. Maximum number of sessions = 8

Student Subjects

Subjects were the children of the parents. Table 3.2 indicates their actual grade placements.

Table 3.2

Actual Grade Placements of the Student Subjects.

Subject	Actual Grade Placement	Subject	Actual Grade Placement
1	3.7	8	3.7
2	2.7	9	3.7
3	2.7	10	4.7
4	2.7	11	3.7
5	2.7	12	1.7
6	4.7	13	1.7
7	3.7	14	4.7

Note. Grade levels are given in terms of school months.
eg. 4.7 indicates grade 4 in the seventh month

Instructional Materials

The books used for the storybook reading sessions were chosen by the parents and their children. The books used were from various sources. Some of the books were already in the home, others were borrowed from either the public or school library and some were purchased during the study. The complete list of books used by the parents is appended. (See Appendix D.)

The investigator also made available lists of books that were suitable for read-aloud sessions and used numerous books to model the different reading procedures that were taught. This list is also appended. (See Appendix E.)

Instructional Procedures

Parent workshops were conducted one evening a week for 8 weeks in two hour blocks. Each session followed the same format:

1. Discussion Time

The investigator invited the participants to share their feelings about the program, about books, about the interactive reading strategy modeled the week before and implemented at home or anything else they wished to discuss. At this time the investigator also clarified the interactive strategies and answered questions from the participants.

2. New Strategy

The investigator introduced a new instructional strategy each session (paired reading, repeated reading, DR-TA, story retelling etc.).

3. Modeling

The investigator modeled the technique using appropriate materials.

4. Refocus

The investigator read a book at each session to demonstrate how to read a book using expression, questions, and pauses to elicit children's responses.

5. Practice

Participants were divided into pairs to practise the targeted technique.

6. Participant Response

Participants were invited to discuss how the procedure worked and to clarify any questions that they might have about the procedure and how to use it.

In the first session the reading process was discussed to familiarize parents with how children learn to read as well as giving them suggestions that they could use at home to maximize their children's reading (see Appendix F). At this time a brief overview of the benefits of storybook reading was also discussed.

To complement reading, one class was used to discuss the writing process and the stages of prewriting, draft, revision, editing and final draft (adapted from Calkins, 1986). Parents had the opportunity to write a character sketch of their children (Harste, Short & Burke, 1988) using the five step approach outlined above. As an "at-home" follow-up, the children also wrote or dictated a character sketch about someone in their family. The sketches were then included in a booklet that was given to the parents at the last session. (See Appendix G for sample entries.)

Test Instruments

The selection of the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (1983) to be used as the informal reading inventory (IRI) to assess children's reading gains in the study was based on its range. This published IRI consists of alternate passages at each grade level from pre-primer to grade twelve, permitting one form to be administered orally as a pretest and an alternate form at the same grade level to be administered orally as a posttest. An alternate feature of the Bader is that in addition to questions, the conventional approach to assessing reading comprehension, there is a retelling component (uncued recall) with accompanying scoring templates to simplify assigning points for the number of ideas recalled.

The use of a widely-known published IRI also facilitates the replication of the investigation. (Refer again to Appendix A for a sample passage and scoring template for uncued and cued recall.)

The Bader (1983) was administered to each of the students individually by the investigator over a one week period at the end of January and again at the beginning of April to provide pre - and post-treatment comparisons on word recognition and comprehension.

A. Word Recognition on Word Lists

The graded word list on the Bader IRI is a series of ten words at each level from preprimer through grade eight. The word lists were used to determine the subject's performance on word recognition in isolation as well as to provide an entry level to the graded passages. For data analysis the total number of words recognized on the pretest was compared to the total number of words recognized on the posttest.

B. Word Recognition in Word Passages

The reading passages range from preprimer through twelfth grade level. The passages were used to determine the subject's word recognition abilities when reading in context. For each passage, a percent was calculated for word recognition based on the total number of words read correctly

divided by the total number of words in the passage multiplied by 100. A reading level was then assigned using the following criteria (Betts, 1957): Independent level - 99 percent; Instructional level - 95 percent; Frustration level - 90 percent. Reading levels were calculated for the pretest and compared to reading levels on the posttest.

C. Comprehension of Story Retellings (uncued recall)

Comprehension was first measured by examining the total number of ideas recalled in the passage oral retellings. Protocols were scored according to the number of ideas recalled during the uncued portion based on the number of ideas present in the Bader template for scoring retellings. (Again see Appendix A for sample.) Scores were transformed into percentages calculated by comparing the actual number of ideas recalled to the total number of ideas in the selection.

D. Comprehension of Questions (cued recall)

After students retold a passage from the Bader, they were asked questions based on the story. The number of questions varied depending on the passage read. Scores were calculated as a percentage using the ratio between the number of questions answered correctly and the total number of questions. A reading level was then assigned using the following criteria (Betts, 1957): Independent level - 90

percent; Instructional level - 75 percent; Frustration level - 50 percent.

Calculating Composite Indices

Calculating composite gains scores for word recognition and comprehension was necessary since the range of possible reading levels for the subjects varied from preprimer to level 5. Such a composite index shows gains in reading levels in addition to taking into account word recognition and comprehension performance scores (Carver, 1988).

The calculation of composite indices also makes it easier to discern growth in the area of comprehension even if there was no growth in word recognition.

Accordingly, for word recognition based on word list performance, the formula for calculating the composite index (CI) was:

CI = number of words correctly identified posttest
minus
number of words correctly identified pretest

For example:

48 words correctly identified posttest
39 words correctly identified pretest
A difference of 9 = 9 months CI score*

* Note: The Bader IRI has 10 words per graded list.

For word recognition based on passage performance, the composite index (CI) formula was:

CI = highest reading level, according to word recognition, posttest

minus

highest reading level, according to word recognition, pretest

For example:

1. 3.98 posttest = grade 3 with 98% word recognition
   2.98 pretest = grade 2 with 98% word recognition
   A difference of 1.00 = 1 grade level = 10 months CI score

2. P.98 posttest = Primer level with 98% word recognition
   PP.98 pretest = Pre-Primer level with 98% word recognition
   A difference of .5 = 1/2 grade level = 5 months CI score

For passage retelling (uncued recall) and cued recall, the composite index (CI) formula was essentially the same.

CI = highest level, based on comprehension, posttest

minus

highest level, based on comprehension, pretest

For example:

Uncued recall (retellings)

3.80 = grade 3 with 80% recall - posttest

2.60 = grade 2 with 60% recall - pretest

A difference of 1.2 = 12 months CI score

Cued recall (questions)

P.9 = Primer level with 90% of the questions correct

PP.9 = Pre-Primer level with 90% of the questions correct

A difference of 5 = 5 months CI score

Summary of Information Obtained and Treatment for Subsequent Data Analyses

A. Word Recognition Accuracy

1. Words in isolation (word lists) - the number of words read correctly on the graded word lists.
2. In order to account for changes in reading level, for purposes of data analysis gains were translated into a composite index for words read in isolation.
3. Words in context (passages) - the number of words read correctly in the passages and transformed into a percentage based on the total number of words in the passages. (Words read incorrectly, insertions and omissions were counted as errors, but not repetitions or self-corrections.)

4. In order to account for changes in reading level, for purposes of data analysis gains were transformed into a composite index for word recognition, based on passage performance.

B. Comprehension

1. Total number of ideas recalled in uncued recall (retellings).
2. To account for changes in reading level, for purposes of data analysis gains were transformed into a composite index for number of ideas found in uncued recall.
3. Cued recall scores (questions).
4. To account for changes in reading level, for purposes of data analysis gains were transformed into a composite index for cued recall.

Scoring for Change in Reading Level

In calculating gains in reading performance, the independent reading level was chosen as the criteria for success since the aim of the parent program was to improve reading levels to the point that the children could read storybooks on their own, or with minimal assistance from parents. A change in reading level from one graded passage to another was deemed to be a change of 10 months which translates into one school year. A change from pre-primer to

primer and from primer to level I was deemed to be a gain of 5 months.

On the pretest, two students did not meet the independent level criteria on any passages. For these students, the instructional level for word recognition (95 percent and above) and comprehension (75 percent and above) was used (Betts, 1957). Another four students, on the pretest, did not meet the independent or instructional level criteria on any passages. For these students, the frustration reading levels for word recognition (90 percent and below) and for comprehension (50 percent and below) were used (Betts, 1957).

Inter-rater reliability.

As a reliability check, an independent judge, a practicing reading clinician in addition to being a Master's level student with a major in reading, rescored 20 percent of the IRI protocols. Pearson product-moment correlations to establish inter-rater reliabilities were computed for word recognition and comprehension. Inter-rater reliabilities were: $r = 0.99$ for word recognition in isolation (word lists); $r = 0.82$ for word recognition in context (passages); $r = 0.87$ for uncued recall (retellings); and $r = 0.77$ for cued recall (questions). This established the reliability of the investigator's scores, which were used in the subsequent analysis.

Design and Analysis

The study employed a pre- and posttest quasi-experimental design, analyzing changes in the children's reading levels based on the dependent variables of word recognition and comprehension discussed in the previous section. The differences between pre - and posttest performance were determined and assigned a numerical value (CI score) that would reveal gains in reading levels. Posttest means on each of the dependent variables were compared and tested for significance through the use of matched paired t-tests for independent means.

In addition to the analysis of quantitative data described in the foregoing, the following qualitative data were also collected and analyzed using regrounding procedures (Kamil et al, 1985).

Attitude Change

1. Pre - and post-program questionnaires for students
2. Pre - and post-program questionnaires for parents

Parent-Child Interactions

1. Three, at home, audio-taped sessions to determine the number of questions initiated by: (a) the students before, during and after reading, (b) the parents, before, during and after reading.

Field Notes

1. Compiled by the investigator after sessions and in conversation with teachers - classroom and resource specialists, the school's principal, vice-principal, and the parents.

Summary

This chapter has described the subjects who made up the sampling group and identified the methods used to implement the study. The instructional materials and workshop format and content were outlined. Scoring procedures and pre - and posttest measures used to determine change in reading levels were delineated. The chapter concluded with an explanation of data analysis procedures. The resultant findings are presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of a parent program on the reading performance of school-aged children identified as reading below grade level. Fourteen subjects were chosen and their parents invited to participate in a series of workshops held once a week for eight weeks. The program was designed to teach interactive reading strategies so that parents could help their children with reading at home. Prior to, and after the eight week course, students were tested individually with the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (1983).

Data obtained in this investigation was processed with the assistance of the Statistical Advisory Service at the University of Manitoba and analyzed in three phases.

The initial phase involved the descriptive analysis of the children's reading levels, pre - and posttest, on four separate measures: (a) word recognition in isolation (word lists); (b) word recognition in context (graded passages); (c) comprehension - uncued recall (retellings); and (d) comprehension - cued recall (questions). Independent reading levels were used for all analyses except when no independent level was established. In these cases the instructional level was compared. In some cases there was no independent or instructional level determined and in these instances frustrational level was used.

Once grade levels had been established for each student, a composite index score was assigned for each of the four dependent measures. Since the initial reading levels of subjects in the study ranged from preprimer to 5.0, composite indices were used to give weight to gains in reading level performance from pre to posttest. Calculating composite indices permitted the revelation of major differences in either fluency or comprehension that might not be evident if differences in reading level were not taken into account. Once composite indices gains were calculated, then scores were plotted on histograms and means and standard deviations calculated for all measures.

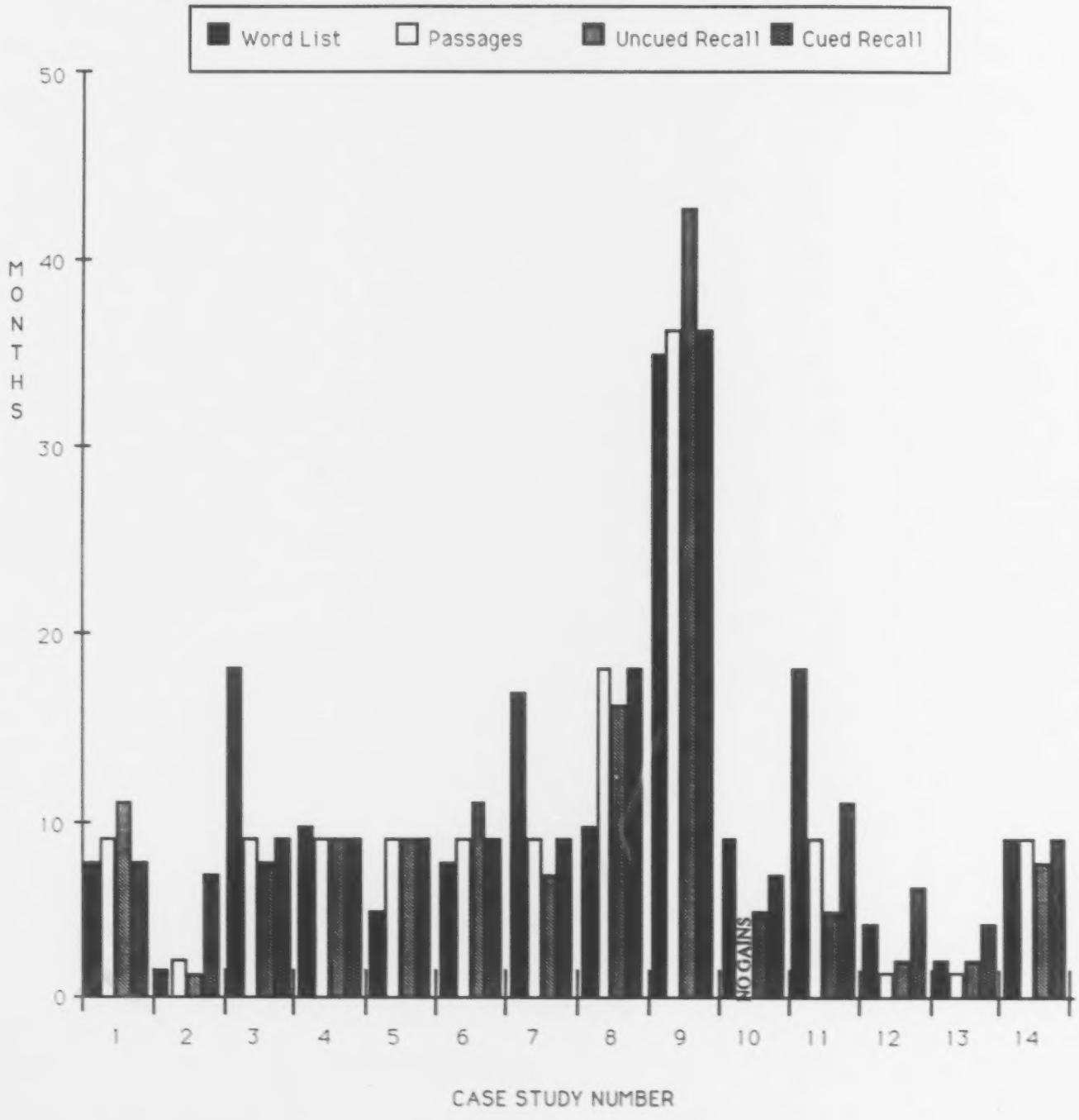
The next phase of the analysis was concerned with determining the efficacy of the parent program in quantitative terms. Three null hypotheses regarding the questions of whether children's reading levels increased in terms of word recognition and/or comprehension and whether a change occurred in either student or parental attitudes toward reading were examined. A one tailed t-test was used to determine the significance of the improvement between pre and posttest reading performance means. Data for students who did not reach independent reading levels was excluded from the statistical analyses.

Descriptive Analysis of the Data

In order to describe performance on the IRI, tables were compiled using the composite index for each measure to show increases in reading levels between the pre - and the posttest. The results are expressed in terms of student growth in months and are shown in Figure 4.1. The study took place over a two month period, so that a growth of at least two months was expected. As is evident in the figure, for each student there was improvement in all areas of word recognition and comprehension beyond the expected two month gain, except for subject number 10 who showed no gains in passage word recognition.

The largest gains were for students 3, 7, 8, 9 and 11. They made CI (composite index) score increases ranging from a low of three months for uncued recall (student 11) to a high of 42 months, also for uncued recall (student 9). Word recognition scores, in isolation, for these students were also very impressive. The lowest CI score increase was 11 months for student 8 and the highest was a score of 39 months for student number 9. It is interesting to note that four of these students were enrolled in grade three at the time of the investigation, but that they were from three different classes with different classroom teachers, except for students 9 and 11, who were in the same classroom.

Figure 4.1 **Histogram depicting pre to posttest gains in both word recognition (measured in isolation - word lists and in context - passages) and comprehension (measured by uncued recall - oral retellings; and cued recall - questions).**



Testing of the Hypotheses

Three null hypotheses were formulated for testing in the qualitative phase of the analysis for the purpose of revealing gains in reading performance. The mean was calculated using the null hypothesis minus 2 months to correspond with the duration of the parent program, thereby controlling for expected growth. All hypotheses were tested for significance at the .05 level but as can be seen from the following tables the significance was much higher and actual figures show a significance at the 0.000 level for all measures of word recognition and comprehension. For the statistical analysis, critical values for the one-tailed "t" test were used to test for significance and only the performance of those subjects who reached an independent reading level was entered (N = 8).

Hypothesis 1. Regarding change in word recognition: There would be no significant increase in the word recognition of the children after the eight weeks of parental instruction as measured by the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (1983).

Word recognition accuracy (words in isolation). The t-tests carried out to test the significance of the increase between pre - and posttest performance on the word list

indicated a significant difference for word recognition accuracy scores (t = 8.839, 7df, p=0.000). (See table 4.1.)

This indicates that the growth was significantly greater than expected under the null hypothesis as it pertains to word recognition accuracy for words in isolation. The null hypothesis can be rejected and the alternate hypothesis that the parent program would improve student's recognition of words in isolation can be accepted.

Table 4.1

Means and standard deviations for children's recognition of words in isolation.

	Pretest to Posttest CI Gain (in months)
Mean	15.25
Standard deviation	17.993
*Number	8
t-statistic	8.839
Degrees of Freedom	7
Significance	0.000

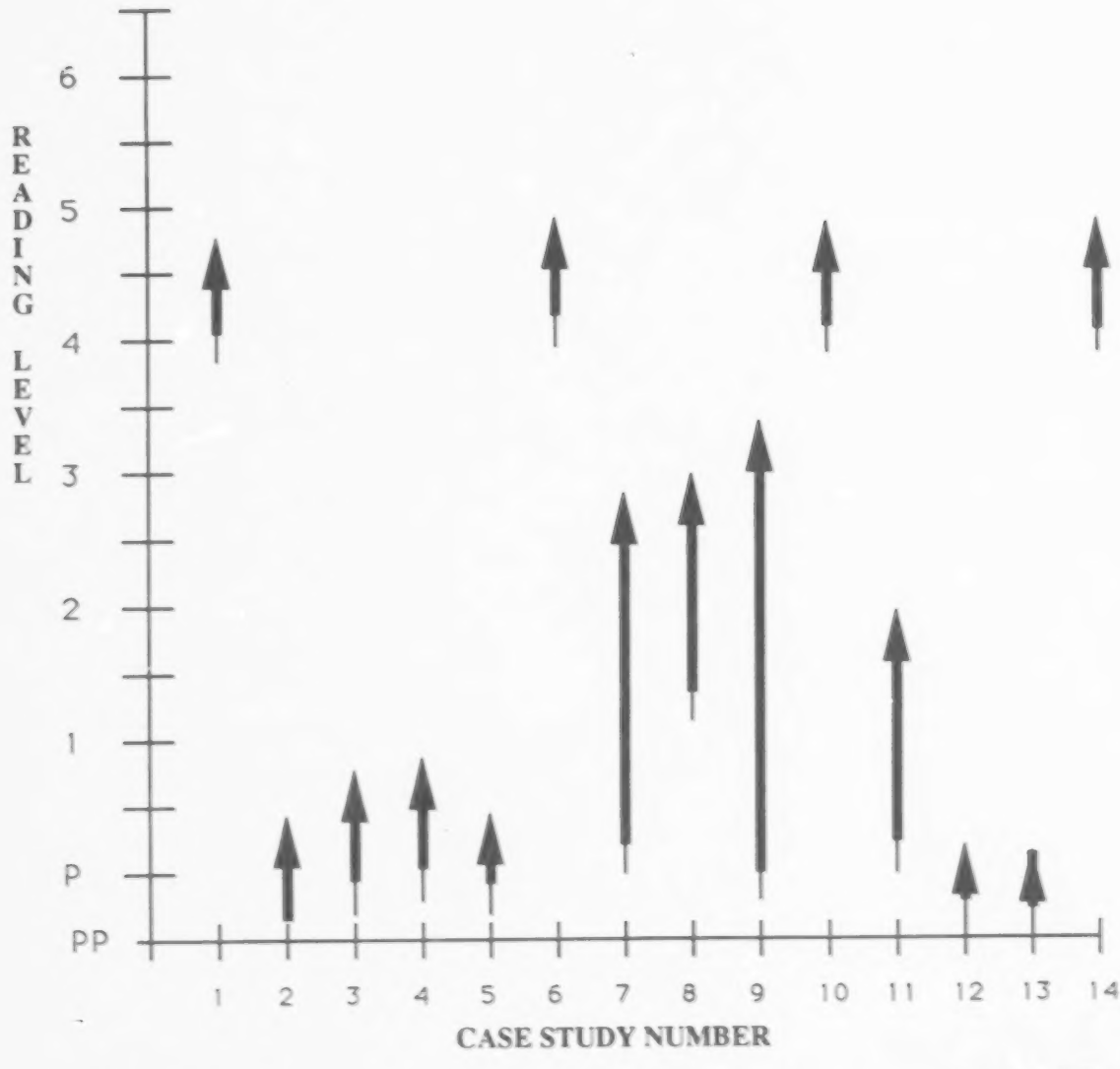
Note. * Based on independent reading levels.

The actual growth in months for each student can be seen in Figure 4.2 which is a histogram depicting the pre - to posttest gains in word recognition performance as measured by words in isolation (word list). The solid black line on the histogram indicates the growth of each student over and above the expected two month gain that would be considered normal taking into account the fact that the school year is 10 months. The two month gain that was factored into the study is depicted on the histogram by the light black line directly below the solid black line.

The position of the arrows shows that the growth for all subjects was in an upward direction indicating that all students made some gains between the pre - and posttest in their ability to recognize words in isolation. It was encouraging to note that no student regressed over the two months of the parent program.

Students 3, 7, 8, 9 and 11 made the most gains ranging from an eleven month CI score increase for student number 8, to a thirty-nine month CI score increase for student number 9. The scores of student number 9 indicate an increase of almost 4 full school years during the two month parent program. This is a tremendous jump in sight word knowledge for a child who could not read even basic words such as and, not, when, and went, at the beginning of the program.

Figure 4.2 Histogram depicting pre to posttest gains in word recognition performance as measured by words in isolations (word list) .



Note: Case numbers 3 and 4 are based on instructional reading levels. Case numbers 2, 5, 12 and 13 are based on frustration reading levels. Remaining cases are all based on independent reading levels.

Word recognition accuracy (words in context). The t-test showed a significant increase for word recognition accuracy in context (graded passages) between the pre - and posttest. (t = 7.048, 7df, p= 0.000) (See Table 4.2.)

Table 4.2

Means and standard deviations for children's recognition of words in context.

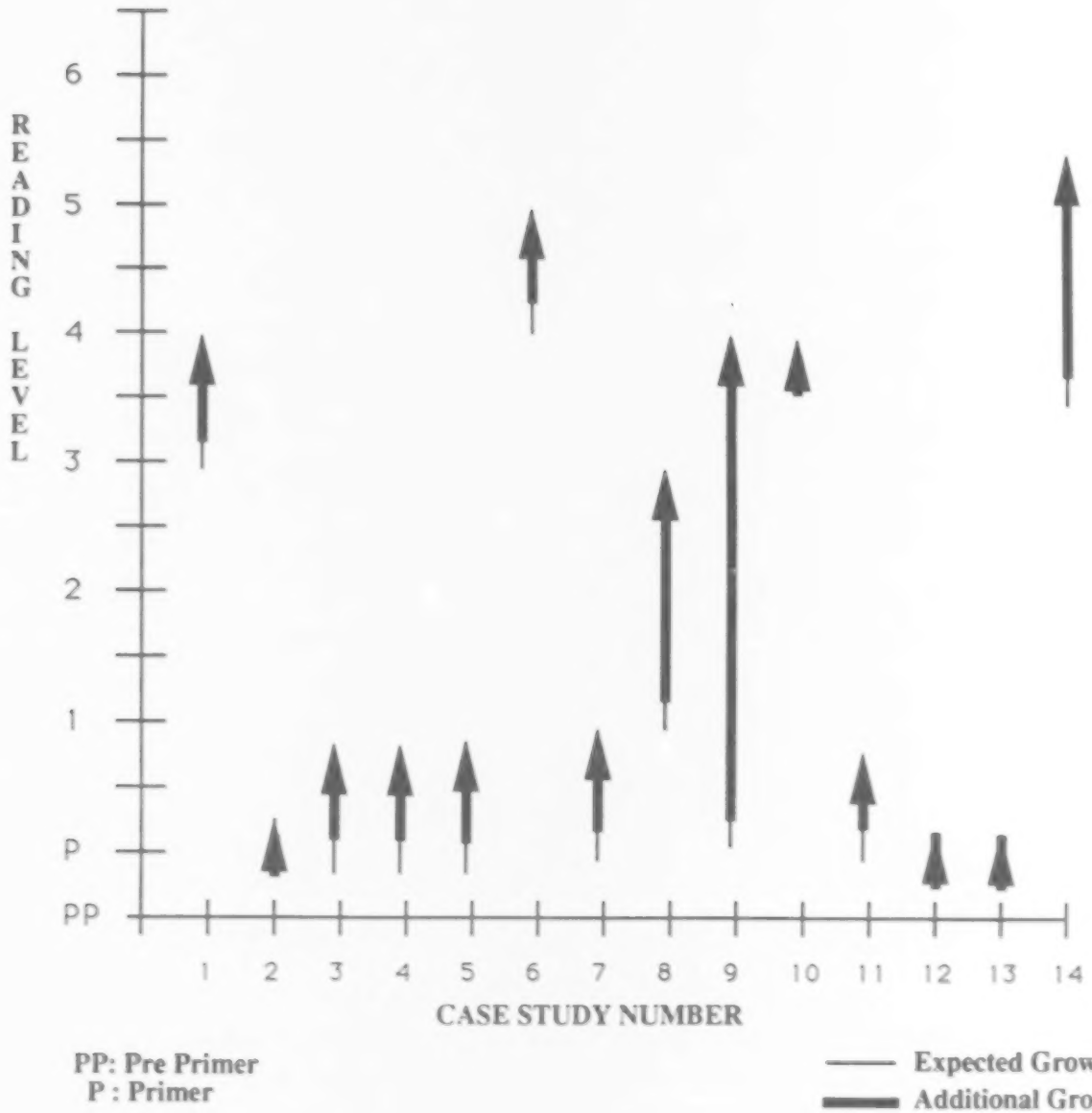
	Pretest to Posttest CI Gain (in months)
Mean	11.875
Standard Deviations	15.712
*Number	8
t-statistic	7.048
Degrees of Freedom	7
Significance	0.000

Note. *Based on independent reading levels

Figure 4.3 depicts the pre - to posttest gains in word recognition performance as measured by words in context (word passages). The solid black arrow shows the direction of growth for each student and takes into account the expected two month growth. The expected growth is depicted with the light black line. In this instance, students 2, 12 and 13 did not make more than the expected two month gain. These students are in grade one (students 12 and 13), and grade two (student 2). Student number 10 (grade 4) did not make any gains at all. It is difficult to speculate why this student did not make even the expected two month gain. This is perhaps due to the fact that he was already reading at grade level on the pretest. Students 3, 7, 8, 9 and 11 once again made the largest gains with CI score increases ranging from 5 months for student number 11 to a high of 35 months for student number 9.

A CI score of 10 months indicates a change of one grade level being achieved in the two month period. It is especially interesting to look at the gains made by student number 9. She recorded a CI score of 35 months which is equivalent to three and a half school years. This is even more impressive when you consider that she made the gains in a span of only two months.

Figure 4.3 Histogram depicting pre to posttest gains in word recognition performance as measured by words read correctly in context (passages).



Note: Case numbers 3 and 4 are based on instructional reading levels. Case numbers 2, 5, 12 and 13 are based on frustration reading levels. Remaining cases are all based on independent reading levels.

Hypothesis 2. Regarding comprehension: There would be no significant difference in comprehension as measured by the comprehension component of the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (1983).

Uncued recall. For the total number of ideas recalled in oral retelling (without cues), there was a significant increase between pre- and posttest mean performance ($t = 7.457$, 7df, $p=0.000$). (See Table 4.3.)

Table 4.3

Means and standard deviations for children's uncued recall (oral retellings) of passages.

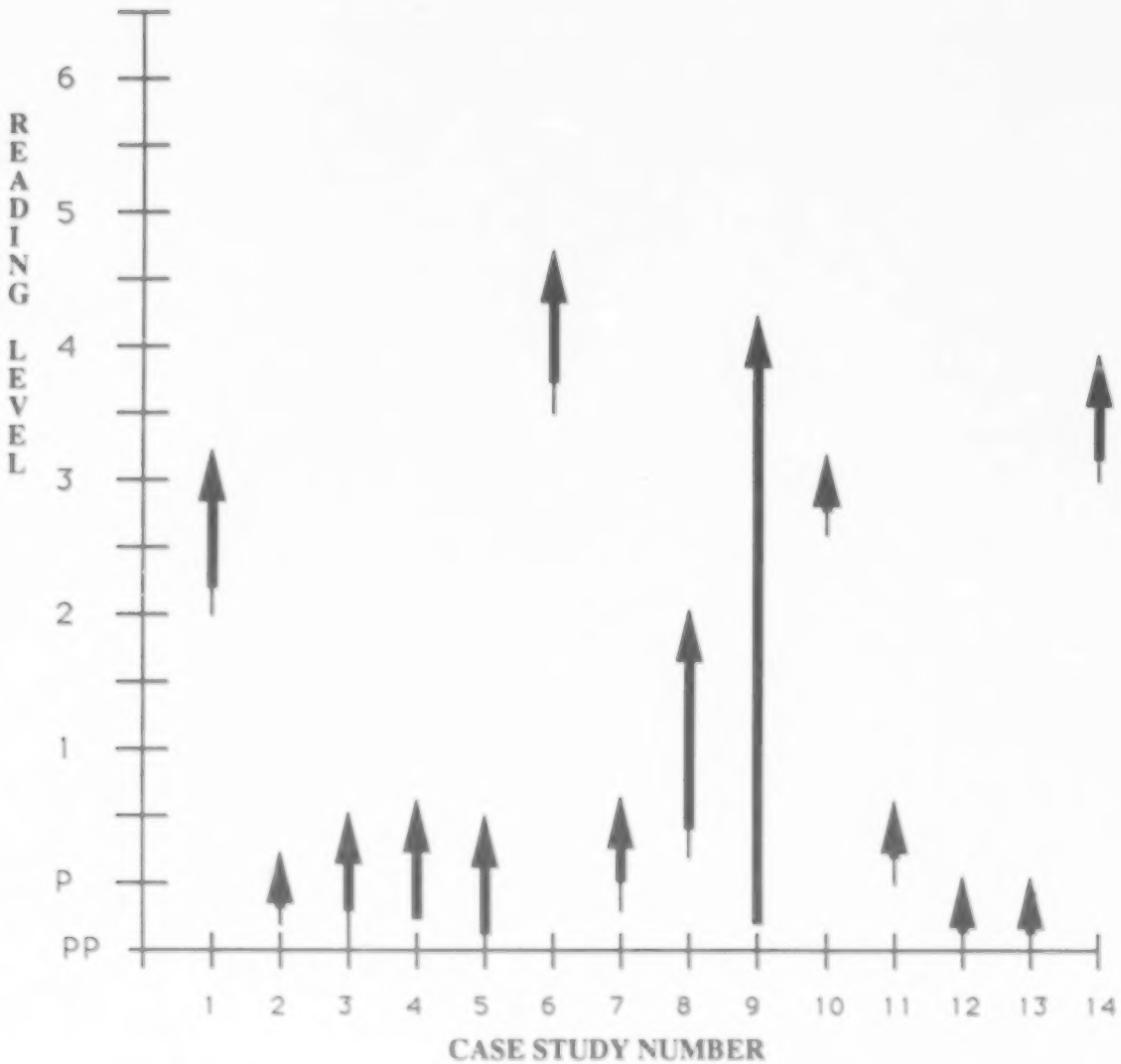
	Pretest to Posttest CI Gain (in months)
Mean	13.000
Standard Deviation	17.421
*Number	8
t-statistic	7.457
Degrees of Freedom	7
Significance	0.000

Note. *Based on independent reading levels.

Uncued recall.

The resultant gains in uncued recall expressed in terms of months are shown in Figure 4.4. The solid black arrows once again point in the expected direction, while the lighter black lines indicate the expected two month gain factored into the analysis. In this instance, all of the students made some measurable gains in comprehension performance of uncued recall between the pre - and posttest. Students 2, 12 and 13 made only minimal gains in this area as can be seen from the histogram in Figure 4.4. They did not improve much beyond the expected two months. The parents of these students report that their children are just not interested in reading. It seems that these students do not yet see a purpose for reading and writing and perhaps that explains why they did not make the same gains as other students. Once again student 9 made the greatest gains, as has been the case with all measures of word recognition and comprehension. In this instance the CI score increase was 42 months which is equivalent to 4 full school years which is a substantial accomplishment. Students 1 (grade 3) and 6 (grade 4) also made important gains. They each recorded a CI score increase of 12 months which is greater than one school year. (A school year was scored as 10 months.)

Figure 4.4 Histogram depicting pre to posttest gains in comprehension as measured by uncued recall (oral retellings).



Note: Case numbers 3 and 4 are based on instructional reading levels. Case numbers 2, 5,1 2 and 13 are based on frustration reading levels. Remaining cases are all based on independent reading levels.

Cued recall. When the results of the cued recall were analyzed, it was found that there was significance between the pre- and posttest cued recall performance ($t = 7.531$, $7df$, $p = 0.000$). (See Table 4.4.)

Table 4.4

Means and standard deviations for comprehension as measured by cued recall (questions).

	Pretest to Posttest CI Gain (in months)
Mean	12.875
Standard Deviation	16.699
*Number	8
t-statistic	7.531
Degrees of Freedom	7
Significance	0.000

Note. *Based on independent reading levels.

Cued Recall

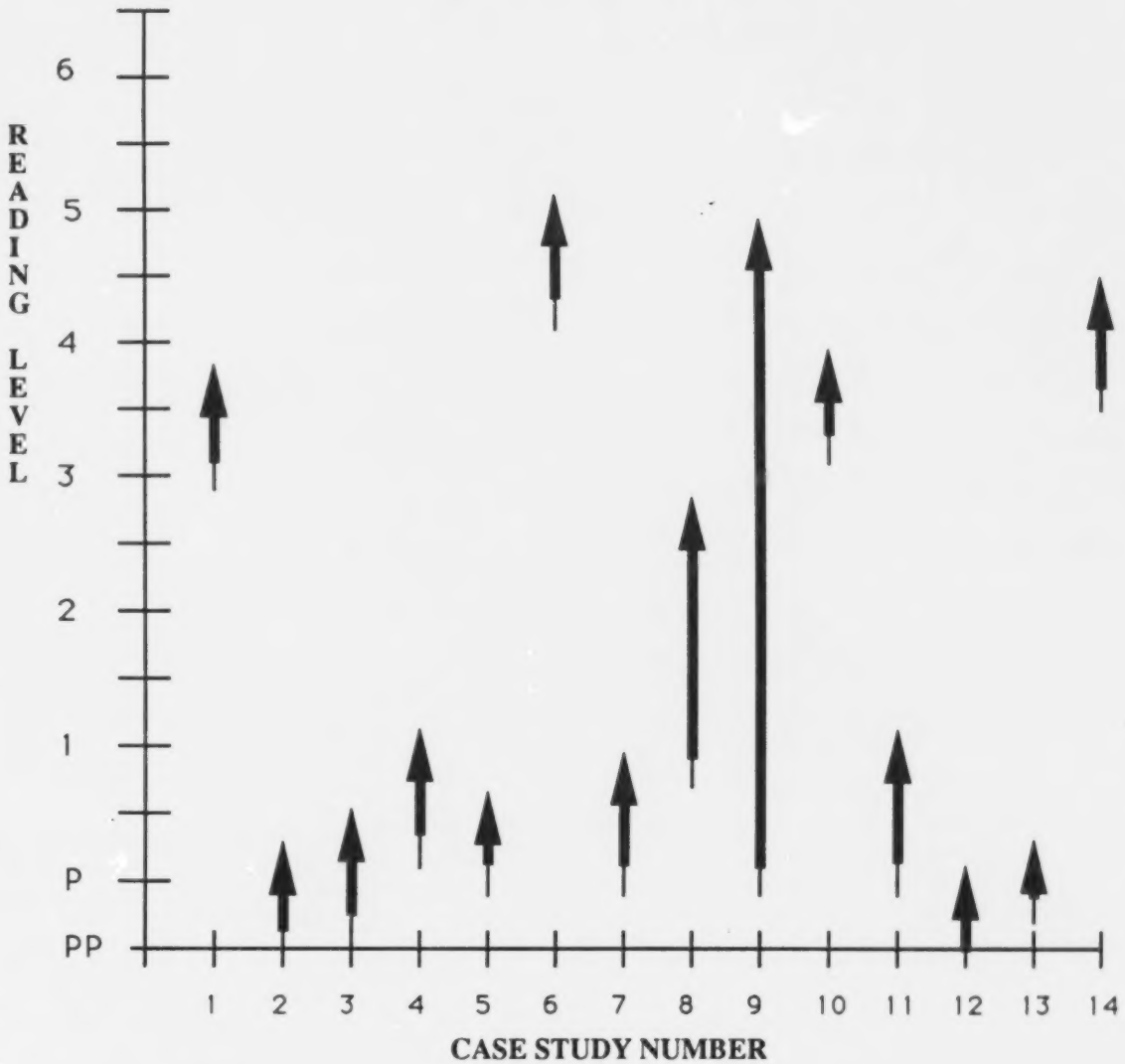
Figure 4.5 shows the results for cued recall. The light black line on the hitogram below the solid black line shows the gain that was expected from each student, taking into account two month's growth over a two month time period. The solid black arrows point in the upward direction once again. They indicate that all the students made measurable gains in excess of what was expected.

The lowest gain was recorded by student 13 who's CI score increased 3 months over the two month time period. Comprehension gains could be an indication of the questioning strategy that parents had been using with their children in the storybook reading sessions at home. This modeling could explain why all students made gains in this area.

There were a number of students who recorded CI increases of 5 months - students 3, 4, 5, 7 and 14. This shows an increase of one half a school year, taking into account a school year of 10 months.

Once again student 9 made the greatest gains. This time a CI score increase of 40 months or 4 full school years was indicated. She began the program at the preprimer level and managed to be independent at the grade four level at the end of the program. Her actual grade placement during the program was grade 3.

Figure 4.5 Histogram depicting pre to posttest gains in reading comprehension as measured by cued recall (questions).



Note: Case numbers 3 and 4 are based on instructional reading levels. Case numbers 2, 5, 12 and 13 are based on frustration reading levels. Remaining cases are all based on independent reading levels.

Summary and Discussion

Students made CI score increases that ranged from 2 to 42 months, indicating that the parent program did help students become better readers. Significance was found on all four dependent variables: word recognition, as measured both by word lists and passage performances, and comprehension, as measured both by uncued and cued recall. Matched pair t-tests were used to establish the probability that these increases occurred by chance. The results were significant on all four variables.

It is interesting to note that subject number 13 made only minimal gains on all measures of word recognition and comprehension. It was discovered after the reading program that this particular student suffered from severe allergies that resulted in a hearing loss. It is perhaps due to this physical problem, not discovered until after the program was completed, that this subject did not make greater gains.

Subject number 9 made the greatest gains in all areas of word recognition and comprehension. Her mother and her teachers could not believe the difference in her performance over the two months. Her mother said after the program:

> I never would have believed that a child could go from barely reading to reading at grade level in two short months. I firmly believe that it was the amount of attention that I gave her everyday

> that helped her. Without this program my daughter would have continued to struggle and I wouldn't have known how to help her. It was to the point that her teachers were recommending that she be kept in grade three for another year. I never read to her, ever, until this program. I didn't realize how important reading to a child was.

It is hard to speculate just why this student made such impressive gains. Perhaps it was all the extra attention that she was getting at home. Perhaps it was due to all the extra reading that she and her mother were doing that helped her see the connection between print and speech. Three months after the end of the program her mother says that she still reads everyday with her daughter because the daughter will not go to bed without at least one story. Before the program, the daughter never wanted to read. But now that she is able to read, she reads everyday. After beginning with simple, easy to read picture books, the student has now progressed to reading short novels and chapter books.

Students number 2 (grade two) and 12 (grade one) both made minimal gains. This can perhaps be explained by the comments of the mothers, who said that their children were just not interested in books. They liked to listen to their parents read to them, but they do not attend to the print and showed no interest in the words. They do not make comments

about the books and did not want to talk about the stories before or after reading. These two students both seem to be in the emergent stages of literacy. This could be the reason that they did not improve as much as some of the other subjects during the two month study. As has been previously stated, these students did not seem to be aware of the purpose for reading and writing and do not yet see a connection between their daily living and the need for literacy. While other students, 3, 8 and 9, for example, were the main initiators of the reading sessions according to their parents, students 2 and 12 did not initiate storybook read aloud sessions. Perhaps because of this, their parents were not as conscientious as some of the other parents in practicing the reading strategies.

The "at home" sessions did not involve just storybook reading. They were in fact mediated reading activities that made use of structured reading strategies such as the directed reading - thinking activities, paired reading and repeated reading. Parents were instructed to discuss the title of the book, the illustrations, and have the children predict what they thought the book might be about, based on their past experienes. The "at home" storybook sessions may have appeared to be very unstructured but they were in fact highly structured. A great deal of teaching was going on.

It sometimes seems that early readers are not taught but simply have parents who read to them often and provide books for them to look at. Such children seem to learn to read by a process of diffusion or "osmosis". This in fact is not the case. Investigations by Butler and Clay (1979), Doake (1986), Martinez (1985) and Teale (1986), discovered that there was always a great deal of teaching going on in the homes of early readers. Parents of successful readers seem to have intuitive knowledge regarding how to interact during storybook reading episodes. Book sharing involves a complex constellation of behaviors (Resnick et al, 1989).

In summary, it would appear that teaching parents selected reading strategies to use while sharing storybooks with their children at home did improve the reading performance of their children on all four measures that assessed word recognition and reading comprehension. To conclude, the empirical evidence obtained in this study supports a program that teaches parents how to interact while reading with their children at home. Implementing programs for the parents of low-achieving school-aged children is an effective approach for promoting the children's word recognition and reading comprehension performance.

Measuring student and parental attitudes to reading.

Hypothesis 3. Regarding change in attitude to reading: There would be no differences in the children's attitude toward reading expressed in interviews with both parents and children.

Pupil Questionnaires. A pre- and post program student interview was administered to measure changes in attitude toward reading, if any, from the beginning of the program to the end. (See Table 4.5.) The investigator read the questionnaire to all students and marked down their responses since many of the pupil's could not read the questions independently. In the opinion of the investigator, this led to a free exchange since the students did not have to worry about writing down their own answers. In the post program interviews, students seemed much more comfortable and more sure of their responses in completing the questionnaire.

In the analysis, one of the interview questions was deleted since the investigator found that some students had difficulty with the concept of number. The question stated: "In the last three months my parents and I read ...". and the students were to give a figure to represent the number of books they had read. Results did not correlate with the lists provided by the parents.

Table 4.5

Differences in Student's Attitudes to Reading As Indicated by Pre - and Post Program Interviews.

	Percentages	
Measure	Pre	Post
Yes, I am a good reader.	35%	64%
Yes, I like to read.	14%	21%
Yes, I like someone to read to me.	43%	86%
If I don't know a word:		
1) I ask someone	29%	57%
2) I sound out the word	71%	43%
The hardest part of reading is the long words.	71%	71%

In answer to the statement: "I think that I am a better reader now than when my mom/dad started reading with me two months ago", sixty-four percent of the students felt that they were better readers, now than they were at the beginning of the program. Even though they perceived themselves as

better readers many students reported that they still did not like to read - 21 percent liked to read at the conclusion of the program compared to 14 percent at the beginning.

There was a marked difference in responses from pre - to post program in the question that called for a response to children's enjoyment of having someone else read to them. In answer to the question: "Do you enjoy having your parents read to you"? on the post program interview, 86 percent stated that they liked to have someone else read to them, compared to only 43 percent in the pre-program interview.

In the pre-program when children were asked: "When you are reading and you come to something you don't know, what do you do"?, the two most common strategies were (a) sound it out - 71 percent; and (b) ask someone - 29 percent. At the conclusion of the program, the two most common answers were still the same but the strategies had changed position. Children reported that (a) they ask someone - 57 percent, compared to (b) sound it out - 43 percent.

It is difficult to draw conclusions from these results because the investigator was not sure that during the pre-program interview the children were saying they try to sound out words because that was an important decoding strategy they had been taught by the resource specialist, whether they might just be repeating back what they had learned, or whether they actually implemented the sounding out strategy when reading. Perhaps subjects were more honest during the post

program interview because the investigator had instructed parents to supply words after 5 seconds if their children were not able to decode on their own (Ekwall, 1986). Another explanation could be that at the conclusion of the program children were now aware of more decoding strategies than previously. The investigator had shown parents the importance of using context to figure out unknown words and this was a strategy that was modeled and practiced in the classes.

When asked: "What is the hardest part of reading for you"?, 71 percent of the children on both the pre - and post program interview said that the hard/long words were the most difficult part of reading for them, while the same number, 71 percent said that the easy words were the easiest part of reading. When the investigator inquired about what they called "easy words", subjects informed her that they meant the words that they already knew. Upon further questioning, students admitted if they only knew more words, they would be better readers.

It is interesting to compare subject responses regarding reading strategies. The subjects who made no gains or very minimal gains, numbers 2, 12 and 13 all said that they "sound out" words that they do not know, while subjects 3, 8 and 9 all said that they "ask someone" when they do not know a word. Perhaps it is the amount of "scaffolding" that goes on between the parent and the child that helps them not only pronounce the word, but understand the meaning of the word and learn a

decoding strategy as well.

The children who saw themselves as being better readers on the post program interview, numbers 7, 8, 9 and 11, were also the children who made substantial gains in reading, while those children, numbers 2, 12 and 13, who did not perceive an improvement in their reading made minimal gains. This points to the importance that attitude plays in how children feel about themselves. If they see themselves as being readers then they might try harder to read and would practice more. As the mother of subject nine said, "My daughter reads everyday now that she knows she can read".

Parental Questionnaires. On the post program questionnaire in answer to the question: "How often do you read to your children"?, 78 percent said they now read with their children on a daily basis, compared to 50 percent at the beginning of the program. The biggest gains in reading achievement perceived by the parents, was in the area of comprehension. At the end of the program, 71 percent of the parents felt that their children now understood more of what they read. This increased comprehension led 86 percent of the parents to admit that their children now showed a greater interest in reading. Seventy-one percent of the parents reported that their children now had a better attitude toward reading. (See table 4.6.)

Table 4.6

Differences in Parent's Attitudes to Reading as Indicated by Pre - and Post Program Interviews.

Measures	Percentage Pre	Post
Yes, I can help my child learn to read.	0.7%	86%
Yes, I read to my children everyday.	10%	71%
Yes, my child understands what I read.	-----	86%
Yes, my child likes to read.	0%	71%
Yes, we talk about the book before and after we read.	0.7%	93%

The most interesting change in regard to attitude noted at the conclusion of the program was the confidence level of the parents. On the post program questionnaire, 86 percent of the parents said they felt more confident about their ability to help their children, while only 0.7 percent felt that way on the pre - program questionnaire. An overwhelming

number of parents, 86 percent, would still like to learn more about the reading process and how to help their children more.

When asked what they learned from the program that was most beneficial both to themselves and their children, parents mentioned the following:

1. They never realized that attitude to reading could make such a big difference;
2. They were less frustrated now with their child's reading then they had been before;
3. Along with more realistic expectations came less anxiety and stress on their part, which they felt helped their children take more risks;
4. They discovered how hard learning to read can be and this resulted in being more patient regarding their children's decoding attempts;
5. They found that "sounding it out" is only one strategy that they can make use of when helping their children at home;
6. They reported that their reading time together was now more positive than it had been;
7. They discovered that this program was a great support group for parents who sometimes feel that their children are the only ones experiencing difficulty in learning to read. Parents reported that they learned a lot from each other.

Taped Sessions

Before, During and After Program

The investigator had the parents audio-tape a pre-, mid- and a post program story time. The investigator attempted to use the tapes to determine if the techniques modeled in class were being used by the participants. The investigator listened to each tape and made notes regarding the following criteria:

1. the number of questions initiated by the parents - before, during and after reading;
2. the number of questions initiated by the students - before, during and after reading;
3. the number of comments made by parents - before, during and after reading; and
4. the number of comments made by students - before, during and after reading.

There was no reluctance on the part of the parents or their children to audio-tape their storyreading sessions so the investigator felt that these would be good indicators of the types of responses made by both parents and the students during storybook reading.

In the first two (the pre- and mid- session audio-tapings) there was very little interaction between parents and their children. The kinds of interactions that were

characteristic during this time were in the form of questions asked by the parent. Usually one or two questions were asked after the book was read. There was a decided increase in the amount of questions asked by the parents (average 8-10) in the last audio-taped story sharing, and this in turn led to increased comments by the children. The amount of interaction present in the last audio-tape together with the statistical gains made by the children supports the research which states that it is not the amount of reading that takes place but the types of interactions that occur between parents and their children (Teale, 1986). Certainly in the last five weeks of the parent program, it is obvious from the audio-tapes that the amount of parent-child interaction increased.

In the first sessions it was difficult even to know if the children were present during the readings because they made absolutely no comment. Reading sessions consisted of the mother or father starting to read, often without saying the title of the book or who the author was. By the end of the program, the majority of the parents were reading the title of the book and getting their children to predict what the story might be about, based on the title and the pictures. These prediction strategies were modeled in the workshops and the parents had the opportunity to practise with partners.

Support Data

Field Notes

Field notes were taken by the investigator whenever a participant or interested other (classroom teacher or resource specialist, principal or vice-principal) made a comment about the program. Most of the parent comments were entered right after class ended while they were still fresh in the mind of the investigator. All other comments were recorded directly after they were made. Highlights are reported week by week as follows.

Week One

The parent program began on January 30th and on this day the investigator had the participants express their personal goals, what they expected from participating in the program. Since many participants gave more than one response, percentages do not add up to 100. The four main parental goals included:

1. Getting their children to read more - 57 percent
2. Having their children enjoy reading - 36 percent
3. Having their children read to the best of their ability - 29 percent; and
4. Helping their children so both of them did not become so frustrated with reading - 29 percent.

Week Two

By the second week, 36 percent of the participants reported that their children's as well as their own attitudes to reading were changing. The children were more eager for book-reading sessions than they were before. When questioned by the investigator why they thought this was so, parents responded that it was because they, the parents, were not putting as much pressure on their children to read. Reading had become such an enjoyable activity that one mother reported that she and her child actually laughed out loud at a book for the very first time ever. This, in her words, was a "big break through." There were still two children (14 percent) who resisted participating in the storybook reading, but their parents reported that the children were "at least listening now" which they saw as an improvement in itself.

Week Three

Parents practiced paired readings this week. This proved to be a very successful activity with most parent-child pairs. Parents reported that because the children only had to read every second page, they were much happier reading and looked forward to their shared book reading times. One classroom teacher told the investigator that she already noticed a difference in attitude toward reading in a child at school.

Week Four

Repeated readings were reported to be a huge success. Parents were requested to read a simple, easy to read book to their children. We chose Freddie the Frog by Rose Greydanus for the early readers and Frog and Toad Fly A Kite by Arnold Lobel for the more advanced readers. Each parent was supposed to read the story to the child first, then let the child read it back and discuss the storyline. They were then to let the child read the book every day and to time the readings to see if their fluency increased. Two mothers reported that their children gained so much confidence with this approach that the children wanted to take their book to school and read it to the class. According to the mothers, "this was unheard of". Their children would normally do anything to avoid reading at school.

What was interesting is that some of the older children set their own goals for the repeated readings and one mother reported that on the very last day her son reached his goal and was so thrilled.

The parents all agreed that this method gave their children increased confidence in their ability to read, and that the children actually began to see themselves as readers. Quite an accomplishment after only four weeks.

Another mom told the investigator that her son always wanted to read in class but didn't want to embarrass himself. She could see the benefits of him reading a selection

repeatedly until he felt comfortable with it and then asking the teacher to call on him in class just "like the rest of the students."

The investigator had suggested that parents take the typed copies of the story, without the pictures, and once the children became familiar with the story to have them read the typed copy. Two moms said their children took one look at the paper and said, "I can't read this without the pictures." The moms reassured their children they could do it, and helped them the first few times. Moms reported that the children were very surprised and pleased at the end of the week to find that they could read text without pictures by themselves.

The fact that the children hesitated to read without pictures indicates the important role of illustrations in helping beginning readers decode the text. Teale (1987) found that the children he studied moved through stages. First they looked at, labelled and commented on the pictures in the book; then they began to weave a story around the pictures; third, they started to create a story with many of the same characteristics that are found in written text, and finally they attended to the actual printed story and decoded the text.

The investigator noticed a difference between those parents who truly wanted to help their children and those who were not so committed. Some parents really made the effort to read with their children every day and try out the

strategies modeled in class, whereas others found excuses to rationalize why they couldn't fit in reading every day.

The mom who said that her son wouldn't sit still for even 5 minutes now reported that he sat for as long as 15 minutes with a book that holds his attention.

Week Five

The session started off with parents talking about how things were going at home. There was a consensus among the participants that their expectations before the class were too high. Now that they had more realistic expectations regarding their children's ability, the situation had improved at home to the point where the children were happier and so were the parents. Not so many fights to read, ending in tears for the children and feelings of guilt for the parents, were reported.

Week Six

One of the classroom teachers reported that both of the students in her room who have parents participating in the program now read in class, show greater vocabulary growth and are more relaxed about their progress. The mothers of these two students reported feeling more relaxed as well, and both said they did not realize the importance of letting their children re-read favourite books. Parents reported that re-reading certainly boosted their children's confidence.

Parents professed to knowing more good quality children's books now than when they started the program.

Week Seven

School report cards went out this week. One mom reported that this was her daughter's best report card yet. The teachers were very pleased with her child's progress and noted that her daughter's attitude to school had completely changed. The mother credited the amount of time that she has spent with her daughter for the improvement. She said that her daughter looked forward to their daily reading sessions and never let her mother miss a day. Her daughter takes books home from school more often and they have begun to use the public library more.

It was at this time that the investigator also talked about writing, and parents wrote a character sketch of their children and the children wrote a character sketch of someone in the family. Only two parents reported that this was a big struggle and that the children did not want to do this. The rest of the parents said that getting their children to dictate a character sketch was no problem. This technique was modeled and practiced by the parents during the class that discussed the writing process.

Other things reported included a mom who said that her daughter (grade two) brought The Cat in the Hat by Dr. Suess home and read the whole book with no problem. Two months ago

she said that would have been an impossible task for her child and one her daughter never would have even attempted.

One mom also stated that her older child, who experienced no reading difficulties, never wanted to read recreationally. She asked if there was anything she could do. The investigator suggested that she find a book that he would be interested in and start reading it out loud to him. She tried this and said that after two chapters he told her that he could read it faster by himself and took the book and finished it in two days. She said it was great to have him interested in something besides television or Nintendo. She was very happy!

Week Eight

This was our wrap-up session and I wanted feedback on how the course went and how it helped the parents if it indeed did. One mom reported that she now chooses better quality children's books to read because she has read enough books to feel confident that she now knows what things to look for in a book.

Parents felt that the program helped them feel more comfortable about their children's school progress. They also believed that their children's attitudes to reading had changed. Results of the post program student interviews support this contention (86 percent of the children felt that they were better readers now).

The biggest change, as gauged by parents, was in their own attitude to their children as learners. Parents no longer expected their children to read books that were too hard for them. One parent said that at the beginning of the program his daughter told him that she couldn't read, that all books were too hard for her. Now she likes to read, especially if she is permitted to choose her own books.

Summary of Results

1. Student Achievement Gains - all of the subjects in this program showed gains in the expected direction on all measures of word recognition and comprehension.

2. Student's Attitudes to Reading - the attitude of the student proved to be an important factor in determining whether they improved a significant amount in word recognition and comprehension. Students who saw themselves as readers made larger gains than those who did not see themselves as readers.

3. Parental Attitudes to Reading - the importance that parental attitude has on children's success in reading is clearly shown on the post program questionnaires. Parents reported that their attitudes had changed regarding reading and also that their expectations for their children's success in learning to read had also been modified. The parents reported that they were more relaxed about the progress of

their children and this resulted in their children being more relaxed and less afraid to make mistakes when reading.

4. Unobtrusive Measures - The principal and vice-principal have reported to the investigator that they have parents telephoning the school wondering how they can enrol in the parent reading program. They have heard about it from their friends and feel that this is something that would be beneficial.

As well, parents in the program have asked the investigator if the course will be taught again and if they could put their friends' names down on a list for the next series of classes. This indicates the program was beneficial for those parents who were involved.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of a parental program on low-achieving student's oral reading (word recognition) and comprehension performance (uncued recall and cued recall). An additional area of concern was to explore whether a parental program that fostered daily reading with children resulted in changes in children's attitude to reading.

Theoretical assumptions supported by empirical research underlie this study. Children who learn to read early had parents or other adults who read to them regularly (Durkin, 1966; Bissex, 1980; Doake, 1981; Teale, 1984). The belief that reading to preschool children will benefit them academically once they enter school is beginning to be accepted universally (Anderson et al, 1985; Butler & Clay, 1979; Doake, 1986; Flood, 1977; Heath, 1986; Holdaway, 1979; Martinez & Roser, 1985; Smith, 1988; Teale, 1987). Statements about the advantages of reading to children can be found in many articles today and can be traced back as far as 1908 (Huey). But what exactly do experts mean when they talk about "reading to your child"?

Teale (1984) suggests that the social organization and language aspects of reading vary significantly, depending upon such factors as the material being used, the age or

developmental level of the child, and the sociocultural backgrounds of the participants. Ninio and Bruner (1978) examined the "dialogue cycles" between a mother and her child when they shared picture books from the time the child was eight months to one and a half years of age. They identified three elements in each story reading event: getting the child's attention, asking questions, and labeling. A similar pattern was found by Heath (1982) in her investigation of the literacy socialization practices of fifteen middle-class primary school teachers as they read to their own preschool children. However, for older children, Heath found the nature of the interaction was different:

> When children were about three years old, adults discouraged the highly interactive participant role in bookreading children had hitherto played and children listened and waited as an audience. No longer did either adult or child repeatedly break into the story with questions and comments. Instead, children were made to listen, store what they heard and on cue from the adult, answer a question. (p.53)

Studies by Flood (1977), Smith (1971), Snow (1983), and Teale, (1978) which examined the interactive practices that parents engage in while reading to their children have revealed several storybook reading practices related to learning to read and reading achievement:

1. The first was that children who had higher performance scores on reading tasks were those children who talked about the books with their parents. This talk included discussions about pictures, how the story related to their experiences and their predictions for what the story might be about. This finding is important since many parents expect their children to sit quietly and listen; and

2. The second finding is that parents who talked about the story while reading had children who displayed more highly developed and expanded concepts than children whose parents did not. The most effective practices included: asking questions before beginning the book which included a discussion of the illustrations; asking a variety of questions while reading, and asking follow-up questions at the end of the story. As was once assumed, reading to children does not mean the same thing to everyone. The nature of parental involvement in storybook reading is what is important.

The amount of time devoted to storybook reading is another important factor. How much time should parents devote to reading to their children? The research in this area is limited, but studies generally indicate that children whose

parents read to them on a regular basis (at least four times a week, but preferably every day) for 8-10 minutes exhibit more positive attitudes and higher reading achievement levels than do children whose parents do not read to them (Becher, 1985).

The implication from these studies is that teachers need to be specific about "how" and "how often" they should read to their children when they request or recommend that parents read to their children to enhance their school learning. It is for this reason that this investigator developed a highly structured program for parents that would teach them selected reading strategies to use at home with their low-achieving school-aged readers. The idea of making the reading time an active rather than a passive experience was explained and modeled for parents and workshops provided the opportunity to practice the strategies in class.

Reading to children helps them develop "some global sense of what reading is all about and what it feels like," as it did Bissex's (1980, p.130) five year old son Paul. It also is one means by which children develop some insight into the fact that print is meaningful (Smith, 1978). Becher (1985) expands on Smith's statement when she says that reading to a child:

> has been shown to significantly increase children's: listening and speaking vocabularies;

> letter and symbol recognition abilities; length of spoken sentences; literal and inferential comprehension skills; number and nature of concepts developed; interest in books and reading; and view of reading as a valued activity. (p.46)

There is limited research on the use of parent programs to benefit low-achieving school-aged readers. The studies cited, for the most part, focus on preschool children, although Nickse (1988) developed an intergenerational program to teach illiterate parents to read so they could read to their children at home. The Nickse program, while not identical, contains some of the same elements as the program developed for this investigation. The tutors in Nickse's research followed a four step plan that included: demonstration; guided practice; independent practice; and evaluation. This investigator incorporated many of these elements in her workshops.

Given a group of 14 students (the children) who had not yet learned to read after having spent from six months to four and a half years in school, the effects of a parent program which advocated parents read regularly to their children using strategies discussed and modeled in class were examined, using the following null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1. Regarding change in word recognition: There would be no significant difference in the word recognition performance of the children after eight weeks of parental instruction as measured by the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (1983) on either:

a. words in isolation - word lists; or
b. words in context - passage reading.

Hypothesis 2. Regarding comprehension: There would be no significant difference in comprehension as measured by the comprehension component of the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (1983) with respect to:

a. uncued recall - children retelling the passage in their own words; and
b. cued recall - children answering comprehension questions.

Hypothesis 3. Regarding change in attitude to reading: There would be no differences in attitudes toward reading expressed by either the parents or the children.

This chapter summarizes the findings related to the hypotheses and draws conclusions from the results. Implications for classroom practice and suggestions for further research follow.

Summary of Research Findings

Results for Change in Word Recognition

The first hypotheses was concerned with possible changes in independent reading level for word recognition. The results on the one-tailed t-tests showed growth significantly greater than expected under the null hypotheses for both word list performance (t = 8.839, 7df, p=0.000) and word recognition in passage reading (t = 7.048, 7df, p=0.000). The mean was calculated using the null hypotheses minus 2 months to correspond with the duration of the parent program, thereby controlling for expected growth after two months in school, based on a 10 month school year. These results indicate that the investigator's hypothesis must be rejected and the alternate hypothesis be accepted because teaching parents did lead to gains in children's overall word recognition both out of context (word lists) and in context (passage reading). These results are not supported specifically in the literature, as no previous study has used low-achieving students to prove the benefits of parents reading aloud to children to enhance children's reading performance, with the exception of the Feitelson et al (1986) investigation which proved reading aloud everyday at school was of benefit to disadvantaged first graders.

Results for Changes in Comprehension

The question was would the parent program lead to increased comprehension performance for the children especially since parental interactions stressed meaning. Using a formula based on changes in reading level and controlling for expected gain of two months, the total number of ideas recalled (from oral retelling - uncued) and answers to follow-up questions (the cued recall scores) was analyzed. On both measures, the uncued recall ($t = 7.457$, 7df, $p=0.000$) and the cued recall ($t = 7.531$, 7df, $p=0.000$), results were significantly greater than expected, based on the null hypotheses.

These findings support the belief that teaching parents selected reading techniques to use with their low-achieving school aged children benefits both the children's word recognition and their comprehension.

Questionnaires

Results for Change in Attitudes toward Reading

Heath (1982) determined that the parents from "Mainstream" homes possessed high expectations in regard to their children's literacy development. Parents expected their children to learn to read and the children did, in almost as natural a fashion as they learned to walk and talk. "Mainstream" attitude to learning was positive, children saw

themselves as readers and writers even before they went to school.

In "Roadville" on the other hand, parents wanted their children to achieve in school and worked hard at preparing them for school by reading books and talking to them. But differences in parental reading styles developed when the children were 3 years old. Parents expected nothing from the children when reading, except that they sit quietly and listen to the story. Children in this community seemed to receive mixed signals. Their involvement in reading became more passive. When they reached a certain age they realized that reading was not something to engage in for enjoyment, it was something that had to be done.

In the "Trackton" community, the children were not socialized to be literate. Parents did not interact with their children in a literate way. There were no parent-child discussions, parents did not read books themselves and there was no attempt made to include children in conversations. It is no wonder that the children in this community did not develop positive attitudes toward reading and learn to understand the form and functions of print as the children from "Mainstream" did.

In light of Heath's research, the investigator attempted to determine both parental and student attitudes toward reading before and after the program. Before the program only 50 percent of the parents said that they enjoyed reading to

their children and read on a daily basis, and only 14 percent of the students admitted they liked to read. In contrast to these figures, post program attitude survey results indicated that 78 percent of parents enjoyed reading with their children and read daily, while 21 percent of the students indicated that they now liked to read. This indicates that the program resulted in a positive attitude change.

Once the parents were given instruction on how to structure reading at home so that their children became active learners, parents reported that their reading sessions with their children were much more positive and less frustrating for both the children and themselves. This finding is supported by the children's reports. Before the parent program only 43 percent of the children admitted they liked someone to read to them, but after the program, 86 percent said that they enjoyed being read to. As a matter of fact, a great many parents said their children would no longer go to bed without at least one story - even if it were a short one.

In the area of comprehension, 71 percent of the parents reported on the post interview that they felt their children understood more of what they read than before. This is supported by the statistical significance of gains in reading comprehension which showed increases in both uncued and cued recall. Seventy-eight percent of the parents indicated that after the program their children had a better attitude to

reading and felt good about themselves. Teachers reported that attitude to reading was very noticeable in the classroom. Students who had been having difficulties in reading now wanted to read in class and were more confident about participating in reading lessons. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the types of interactions going on between the students and their parents were now more school-oriented than they had been previously. This could explain why the children were more confident. The children had an opportunity to practice at home what was expected of them in the classroom.

Parental attitude to reading appears to have undergone as big a change as that of the children. After the program, 71 percent of the parents said that they now enjoyed working with their children and felt that they could make a contribution to their children's literacy development. The biggest change for parents, as reported in the investigator's field notes and on the questionnaire, was the parental realization that attitude plays a major role in determining the children's reading success. Parents also saw the program as being a positive learning experience for themselves in terms of seeing reading as a process. Group discussions, which were fundamental to the program, made a great difference to parents. Parents reported that they felt they had found a support group. It was important for the parents to learn: (a) that their children were not the only ones having reading difficulties; and (b) that they weren't the only ones who

became frustrated when trying to help their children at home.

In the feedback sessions every effort was made to reassure parents whose children were not responding to the strategies advocated by the instructor and to counteract any negative effects they may have felt during the sharing sessions when some parents reported highly successful responses to the at home activities that week.

At the end of the program many parents commented that their children were finally beginning to see a purpose for reading and writing. Before the program parents had not encouraged their children to read environmental print, to write letters and post cards when they were on vacation or to leave notes for their parents. After discussing these ideas in class some parents began including a short note with their children's lunch. The parents reported that this was very successful and some of the children were writing back. It provided practice in reading but it also showed the children that there is a purpose for reading and writing. The children were also reading signs when they went shopping which is something they had not done before. Just as Schieffelin and Cochrane-Smith (1986) found in their case studies, the best conditions in the home or school won't help those children who do not, themselves, see a purpose for reading and writing.

The subjects in this investigation were beginning, at the end of the program, to see a purpose for learning to read

and with their new found success in reading they were confident enough to begin to read and write for themselves.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the results of this investigation suggest that teaching parents selected reading strategies to use while reading with their children at home is an appropriate activity that can successfully improve word recognition and comprehension performance for low-achieving, school-aged children in grades one to four.

The results have proven to be statistically significant and suggest that involving the parents of low-achieving readers in a family reading program is worth the time and effort it would take to implement in the schools.

The importance of storybook reading in improving student as well as parental attitudes appears to play a large part in helping students see themselves as readers. Children began to see themselves as being capable of learning to read the text not just the pictures. Parents discovered the importance that pictures have in helping children become literate and no longer worried when their children wanted to talk about the pictures. What is just as important is that the parents were reassured that their children would indeed become readers. Previously they had begun to despair that their children would ever learn to read.

Applying literacy program evaluation guidelines established by Padak and Padak (1991) outlined below, the workshops were effective, not only in terms of personal elements but also from the standpoint of programmatic and external factors.

1. Personal factors
   - There were more changes in the children's achievement levels as well as in their self-esteem.
   - There were changes in the adult's perceptions of their children as learners.
   - The secure, comfortable informal atmosphere in which parents were invited to share their concerns contributed to the success of the workshops.

A community of learners was established thus the program was successful as measured both academically and in terms of the quality of life.

2. Programmatic factors
   - The structure of the program included collaborative discussion as well as the demonstration and modeling of ways of interacting with children during storybook reading episodes. Opportunities for practice and feedback were provided. These instructional techniques are grounded in current research regarding

teaching and learning (Roehler, Duffy & Meleth, 1986) and judged according to frequency of attendance were appropriate.

- The content of the program, that permitted personal choice regarding storybook selection and focused on such strategies as paired and repeated readings, the efficacy of which is established in current research about reading (Samuels, 1979; Topping, 1986), attests to the validity of the program.

3. External factors

- Feedback from both classroom teachers, resource specialists and the school administration supports the efficacy of the program.
- The fact that other parents in the community wanted to participate is additional evidence that substantiates the program's success.

Educational Implications

The following implications are offered on the basis of the present investigation:

1. A parent program such as developed for this study is an effective way to improve children's reading in terms of both word recognition accuracy and comprehension. While the numbers in the study were small, the results achieved by this group lead the investigator to conclude that all children

could benefit if parents were taught how to read with their children. A replication of this study, to demonstrate the external validity of the program, is required, however.

2. Teaching parents how to help their children become better readers has proven to be beneficial in terms of student achievement. With this in mind, it seems appropriate for schools to involve the parents more actively in their children's reading acquisition. Telling parents to go home and read to their children is not realistic, considering the amount of skill that goes into the process we call "reading aloud".

3. For students who are considered low-achieving, the importance of knowing different reading strategies (repeated readings, paired readings, DR-TA) that can be used to enhance reading success as they read with their parents improves attitudes to reading and makes parents more confident in their ability to help.

Concerns

The following concerns need to be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings of this research:

1. The small number of participants involved (14). The use of larger sample sizes would add more statistical power to the analysis.

2. The fact that the participants were not randomly chosen. The parents in the study wanted to participate, so perhaps

there was a greater degree of commitment from these parents than would be expected from the general public. The subjects represented a middle-class socio-economic level in a suburban Winnipeg neighbourhood. The findings cannot be generalized beyond this setting.

3. The field notes kept by the investigator were not audio-taped and therefore relied on the memory and interpretation of the investigator. Had field notes been audio-taped, they could have been verified by a third party.

4. The use of questionnaires may have limited the amount and kind of information received. The investigator felt that this was not a problem, however, as the participants did not appear to be reticent in responding. They were very open about their frustrations and feelings of helplessness as they pertained to their children's reading progress.

5. The investigator could not personally observe parental interaction with the children and had to rely instead on the three audio-taped sessions to determine if parents were practicing what was being taught in the training sessions. Information regarding parent-child interactions during storybook reading may have been especially informative, for students who made minimal gains.

Recommendations for Further Research

Suggestions for further research based on the results of this study are offered as follows:

1. A larger sample could be employed using children from different areas of the city rather than in one school.
2. A follow-up test could be conducted two months after the program ended and again after six months, to see if the reading gains continued.
3. A control group of students who continue to receive specialist help without parent involvement could be employed to see if the results obtained can indeed be attributed solely to the parents.
4. A group of learners who are considered "average" should also be tested to determine if every student in the class would make a two month gain over a period of two months, which was the experimental control factored into this study.
5. As part of the instructional program participants could make up a story using the pictures in a picture book to demonstrate to parents the importance of illustrations in helping children form a hypothesis about story events.
6. The interactions between parent and child during storybook reading episodes could be documented through videotapes in order to describe the role of parents in their children's reading development more definitively.
7. Ensure that the investigator counters the possible negative aspects of the support group. In this study, the

investigator was very careful to ensure that the support group did not become a negative factor for those parents whose children were not progressing as quickly as some of the other children by closely monitoring the discussions and offering support to these parents.

8. Incorporate a more intensive writing program to ascertain whether a writing component added to the storybook reading would help those children who were making only minimal gains and not participating as actively as other children in storybook sharing.

Recommendations for Future Programs

1. The program ran for eight weeks in two hour time blocks. This was adequate for the reading component, but many parents wanted input into how to help their children become better writers as well. In this instance, a second series of workshop sessions would be needed that would last approximately four weeks. Since writing reinforces reading, the investigator sees this as a logical follow-up to the reading program. The efficacy of the writing component could be evaluated through the holistic evaluation and/or primary trait scoring of pre - and post program writing samples.

2. The length of classes was two hours and this proved to be appropriate. The investigator found that this allowed time for modeling and practice. The sessions were not rushed, nor

did they become tedious in this time frame. There was also time for discussions and questions.

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A P P E N D I C E S

APPENDIX A: Sample Passages from Bader Reading and Language Inventory, (1983).

APPENDIX B: Pre and Post-training Student and Parent Interviews

APPENDIX C: Letter of Consent

APPENDIX D: List of Books used by Participants

APPENDIX E: List of Books used by Investigator

APPENDIX F: Suggestions to Maximize Story Reading

APPENDIX G: Sample Character Sketch

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE PASSAGES FROM BADER READING AND LANGUAGE INVENTORY, (1983).

GRADED WORD LIST

Student Name _____ Highest independent level (0-1w) _____

Highest instructional level (2w) _____

Lowest frustration level (3w) _____

WORD RECOGNITION LIST

A PP	B P	C 1.0	D 2.0
____ the	____ come	____ today	____ biggest
____ am	____ you	____ does	____ where
____ get	____ went	____ three	____ yourself
____ is	____ him	____ from	____ those
____ and	____ two	____ under	____ before
____ here	____ then	____ began	____ things
____ see	____ know	____ name	____ stopped
____ not	____ around	____ there	____ place
____ can	____ pet	____ could	____ always
____ will	____ house	____ again	____ everyone

E 3.0	F 4.0	G 5.0	H 6.0
____ morning	____ important	____ because	____ aircraft
____ since	____ airport	____ bridge	____ necessary
____ together	____ through	____ microscope	____ argument
____ because	____ fifteen	____ curious	____ chemical
____ which	____ information	____ estimation	____ representative
____ near	____ ocean	____ reliable	____ terminal
____ should	____ preview	____ government	____ apology
____ yesterday	____ laughter	____ business	____ instruction
____ eight	____ preparation	____ directions	____ evidence
____ remember	____ building	____ avenue	____ consideration

Here is a story about a boy named James. 3C (p. 135)

JAMES' CUT

It was after lunch when James cut his finger on the playground. He was bleeding and he hurt a little too.

He went inside to find his teacher. He showed her his cut finger and asked for a band-aid. She looked at it and said, "Well, it's not too bad, James. I think we should wash it before we bandage it, don't you?" James did not want it washed because he thought it would sting. But he was afraid to tell Miss Smith. He just acted brave.

When it was washed and bandaged, he thanked Miss Smith. Then he rushed out to the playground to show everyone his shiny new bandage. (111 words)

GRADED PASSAGES: EXAMINER'S COPY

Unprompted Memories

Please retell the story.

____ James cut finger
____ on playground after lunch
____ bleeding and hurt
____ went to teacher, showed finger
____ asked for band-aid
____ she looked and said wash first
____ then bandage
____ James didn't want it washed
____ he thought it would sting
____ acted brave when washed and bandaged
____ said thank you, went back to playground
____ showed his new bandage

Comprehension Questions

____ What happened to James? (cut his finger)
____ When did he hurt himself? (after lunch)
____ Where did the accident happen? (on playground)
____ Where did James go when he cut his finger? (inside school to find teacher)
____ What did the teacher say? (they should wash it)
____ Why didn't James want it washed? (he thought it would sting)
____ How did James act when he was getting his finger washed? (brave)
____ What did he do after it was bandaged? (said thank you)
____ (went back to playground)
____ What did he show his friends? (new bandage)

Interpretive question: Why didn't James want to tell Miss Smith he was afraid to have his finger washed.

Acceptable answer: ____ Yes ____ No

Here is a story about astronauts and deep-sea divers. 3CA (p. 136)

TODAY'S EXPLORERS

Astronauts fly far away from the earth. They explore space and the moon. Maybe, in time, they will explore other worlds, too. Deep-sea divers go to the floor of the sea. They explore places just as strange and wonderful as astronauts do.

You may have seen some beautiful fish in the ocean. If you were a diver, you could go far under water. You could stay there long enough to see many unusual creatures. You would find things you never dreamed of.

The only way you could stay under water for more than a short time is to use special gear. You must use the same kind of gear divers use. A large air tank lets you stay under water for an hour.

Today explorers go under the sea and far into space. (134 words)

GRADED PASSAGES: EXAMINER'S COPY

Unprompted Memories

Please retell the story.

____ astronauts fly from earth

____ explore moon and space, other worlds

____ deep-sea divers go to sea floor

____ they explore strange and wonderful places

____ may have seen fish in ocean

____ divers go far underwater

____ you may see unusual creatures

____ find things you never dream of

____ stay under, use special gear

____ kind of gear divers use

____ air tank lets you stay under-water for an hour

____ explorers go under sea and into space

Comprehension Questions

____ Where do astronauts explore? (space and moon)

____ Where might they explore in future? (other worlds)

____ Where do divers explore? (floor of sea)

____ What may you have seen in the ocean? (beautiful fish)

____ What could you see if you were a diver? (unusual creatures or things you haven't dreamed of)

____ How do divers stay underwater? (use special gear or air tank)

____ How long could a larger air tank let you stay underwater? (an hour)

____ Where do explorers go today? (under sea and into space)

APPENDIX B

PRE-TRAINING AND POST-TRAINING STUDENT AND PARENT INTERVIEWS

STUDENT READING INTERVIEW (PRE-PROGRAM)

Name _____ Grade _____

1. Do you like to read?

_____ very much _____ sometimes_____not at all

2. Do you like when someone else reads to you?

_____very much _____sometimes _____not at all

3. What kinds of books do you like to read?

_____novels _____comics _____picture books _____other

4. What is the hardest part of reading?

_____the words _____ understanding

5. What is the easiest part?

_____the words _____understanding

6. When you are reading and you come to something you don't know, what do you do? _____skip it _____sound it out

_____ use the context _____ dictionary

7. Do you think that you are a good reader? _____yes

____no

FINISH THESE SENTENCES

1. When I read I _____

2. Learning to read is _____

3. The biggest problem with reading is _____

4. I would like to be able to read _____

_____

- adapted from C. Burke (1984) and Bader Reading and Language Inventory (1983)

PARENT READING PROGRAM (PRE)

1. Do you enjoy reading? _____ very much _____sometimes _____ not at all
2. Do you read to your child(ren) on a regular basis? ___yes ____no How often? everyday ____; once a week _____ once a month _____; less than once a month _____ other _____
3. Do you talk about the story before you read it? _____yes _____no _____sometimes
   After you read it? _____yes _____no _____sometimes
   What kinds of things do you talk about? _____
4. Do you have children's books in your home? ___yes ____no Approximately how many do you have? ____less than 10 _____10-40 _____40-70 _____70-100 _____more than 100
   What kinds of books? ____picture books _____novels
5. Do you and your children make use of the school and/or Public Library? _____yes _____no _____sometimes
6. Does your child like to read? _____ very much ____sometimes _____ not at all
7. Do you know how to help your child become a better reader? _____yes _____no
8. What is your main concern about your child's progress in reading? _____

- adapted from Bader Reading and Language Inventory, (1983)

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE (POST-PROGRAM)

1. In the last three months my parents and I read

   _____more than 20 books _____10 - 20 books

   _____5-10 books

2. I like to read.

   ____very much _____sometimes _____not at all

3. I like to read in my spare time.

   _____always _____sometimes _____never

4. I think that I am a better reader now?

   _____yes _____no _____don't know

5. What do you think of your reading? Is it easy or hard for you? _____easy _____hard _____don't know

6. What is the hardest part of reading for you now?

7. What is the easiest part?

8. What are your favourite books? Why?

9. When you are reading and you come to something you don't know, what do you do?

10. Do you enjoy having your parents read to you?

    _____yes _____no _____sometimes

adapted from Bader Reading and Language Inventory, (1983); Burke (1984); and Fredericks and Taylor, (1985) Parent programs in reading: Guidelines for success. IRA:Newark, Delaware.

PARENT READING INTERVIEW (POST PROGRAM)

You and your child have been participates in the family reading program for the past three months. We are interested in learning your feelings about the program. Please circle the letter following each statement that describes how you feel.

USE THE FOLLOWING KEY WHEN MAKING YOUR SELECTIONS

Key
A = definitely yes
B = Yes
C = Uncertain/Don't Know
D = No
E = Definitely No

MY CHILD					
1. understands more of what he/she reads	A	B	C	D	E
2. reads more books now	A	B	C	D	E
3. enjoys reading with family members	A	B	C	D	E
4. likes to go to the library	A	B	C	D	E
5. has a better attitude about reading	A	B	C	D	E
6. can understand more words	A	B	C	D	E
7. feels good about what he/she does	A	B	C	D	E
8. reads more on his/her own	A	B	C	D	E
AS A PARENT I					
9. read with my child on a regular basis	A	B	C	D	E
10. can now help my child in reading	A	B	C	D	E
11. feel good about my child's reading	A	B	C	D	E
12. would like to know more about how I can help	A	B	C	D	E

PARENT READING INTERVIEW (POST PROGRAM) CONTINUED

Please check (x) those items in each section which best describes the changes in your attitudes, behaviours or skills. Check as many as needed to describe the changes in you or your family during the course of this program.

1. Changes in Attitude/Behaviour

_____ I enjoy working with my child more.
_____ I enjoy our sharing times together.
_____ Our family reads more books together.
_____ Our family chooses reading as a free-time activity.
_____ We visit the library more.
_____ We watch less TV.
_____ Our family shares magazines, newspapers, and books.

2. Changes in Attitude Toward Reading My Child

_____ seems to enjoy reading more.
_____ enjoys reading with me.
_____ enjoys reading to other members of the family.
_____ brings more books home now.
_____ sees reading as a worthwhile activity.

3. Personal Changes

_____ I understand more about the reading process.
_____ I can now help my child succeed.
_____ I have a more positive attitude about school.
_____ I can help my child with his/her homework.
_____ I can make reading a natural part of our family activities.
_____ I can now serve as a good model for my child.
_____ I understand the importance of reading in my child's life.

4. What is it that you learned from this program that was most beneficial for you and your child?

- adapted from Fredericks and Taylor (1985) Parent programs in reading: Guidelines for success IRA: Newark, Delaware

APPENDIX C

LETTER OF CONSENT

January 1991

Dear Parents,

I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. As part of the requirements for my Master's Thesis, I am conducting a study to investigate the effects of a teaching program for parents, whose children are experiencing difficulty in learning to read.

The purpose of the study is to determine whether teaching parents selected reading techniques in workshop settings to practice with their children at home will enhance their children's reading achievement.

For this study, parents will make a commitment to attend workshops one evening a week for 8 weeks. Each session will last approximately two hours (7:00 - 9:00 pm) and will be conducted in the home school library. The program will begin in January 1991. As a follow-up to this letter, you will be contacted by telephone and invited to participate.

Confidentially of all participants involved in the study will be maintained. All forms and interview data will be identified by number to ensure anonymity. Fictitious names will be used in reporting. Participants and their children will be asked to fill out interview forms before and after the training sessions regarding their: 1) attitudes to reading and 2) reading habits. As well an Informal Reading Inventory will be administered to the children and audiotaped to determine the children's reading level before and after the parental training sessions. Participants will be allowed to withdraw from the project at any time.

The general findings of the study will be made available to the participants, who will be invited to a post study sharing meeting. In addition, overall results will be shared with the schools' principal, resource, and classroom teachers. Participating parents requesting additional information may contact me at my home by telephoning 885-4750.

Thank you in advance for your reply and consideration.

Sincerely,

L. Karen Soiferman

January, 1990

I would like to participate in the research of L.K. Soiferman's Master's thesis on teaching parents how to read to their children.

Name _____ Telephone _____

Child's name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

APPENDIX D

LIST OF BOOKS USED BY PARTICIPANTS

Subject #1

1. Pigs by Robert Munsch
2. Something Good by Robert Munsch
3. The Scarebird by Sid Fleischman
4. 50 Below Zero by Robert Munsch
5. Matthew and the Midnight Turkeys by Allen Morgan
6. Thomas' Snowsuit by Robert Munsch
7. Matthew and the Midnight Money Van by Allen Morgan
8. Franklin in the Dark by Paulette Bourgeois
9. Never Say Ugh to a Bug by Norma Farber
10. Architect of the Moon by Tim Wynne-Jones
11. Eyes by Judith Worthy
12. One Monster After Another by Mercer Mayer
13. Alligator Pie by Dennis Lee
14. Harry Kitten and Trucker Mouse by George Selden
15. Cat and Canary by Michael Foreman
16. Prince Bertram the Bad by Arnold Lobel
17. Boris and the Monsters by Elaine MacMann Willoughby
18. Ladybug Ladybug by Ruth Brown
19. The Wuggie Norple Story by Daniel M. Pinkwater
20. Oliver Button is A Sissy by Tomie de Paola
21. The Scariest Stories You've Ever Heard by Katherine Burt
22. Someday Rider by Ann Herbert Scott
23. Good Families Don't by Robert Munsch
24. The Mouse and Mrs. Proudfoot no author recorded
25. The Velveteen Rabbit by Margery Williams
26. The Night the Monster Came by Mary Calhoun
27. David's Father by Robert Munsch
28. Spooky Poems by Jill Bennett
29. Home Alone by Todd Strasser
30. Garbage Delight by Dennis Lee

Subject #2

1. On The Farm no author recorded
2. Tim Catchmouse by Sheila McCullagh
3. Guinea Pigs by Colleen Stanley Bare
4. Nursery Rhymes by Golden Books
5. Whistle Mary Whistle by Bill Martin Jr.
6. Too Large and Too Small by Randell/McDonald
7. Hide and Seek by Randall/Grant
8. Something Good by Robert Munsch
9. There's A Dinosaur in the Park by Rodney Martin
10. Hunter and His Dog by Brian Wildsmith
11. The New Flats by David MacKay
12. The Great Waldo Search by Martin Handford
13. Cookies' Week by Cindy Ward/Tomie de Paola
14. Big or Little? by Kathy Stinson
15. A Dog for Danny by Inez Hogan

16. Benjamin's Portrait by Alan Baker
17. Three Yellow Dogs by Caron Lee Cohen/Peter Sis
18. Snow by Kathleen Todd
19. My Dad Takes Care Of Me by Patricia Quinlin
20. Dinosaur in Trouble First Step Easy to Read Series
21. Jack and Jake by Aliki
22. The Lonely Only Mouse by Wendy Smith
23. Flat Stanley by Jeff Brown
24. The Dick Tracy Storybook Golden Book
25. Rat-a-tat, Pitter Pat by Alan Benjamin/Margaret Miller
26. Today was a Terrible Day by Patricia Giff
27. Three Little Witches First Step Easy to Read Series
28. The Prince's Tooth is Loose by Harriot Ziefert
29. The Great Big Enormous Turnip by Oxenbury/Tolstoy
30. A Giraffe and a Half by Shel Silverstein
31. Amos and Boris by William Steig
32. Corduroy Gets A Pocket by Don Freeman
33. Who Sunk The Boat by Pamela Allen
34. The Loose Tooth by Mackay/Thompson/Schaub
35. Hurry Up Franklin by Paulette Bourgeois
36. Skeeter and the Computer by Modell

Subject #3

1. Dinosaur Ranch by Douglas Borton
2. Just A Day Dream by Mercer Mayer
3. The Clown-Arounds Have A Party by Joanna Cole
4. Babar's Mystery by Laurent de Brunhoff
5. Curious George Goes To A Costume Party by M & H.A. Rey
6. Puppies Are Like That by Jan Pfloog
7. Foofur Plays It Cool by Helane Keating
8. Nature's Children - Raccoons by Laima Dingwell
9. The Magic School Bus at the Waterworks by Joanna Cole
10. Honey I Shrunk The Kids adapted by Nancy E. Krulik
11. Moira's Birthday by Robert Munsch
12. GhostBusters II by Jovial Bob Stine
13. The Rescuers Down Under adapted by A.L. Stinger
14. The Island of the Skog by Steven Kellogg
15. There's A Batwing in my Lunchbox by Ann Hodgman
16. A Christmas Surprise A First Start Easy to Read Book
17. There's A Dinosaur in the Park by Rodney Martin
18. Freddie The Frog A First Start Easy to Read Book
19. Lester's Busy Day by Angela Sheehan and Jill Coleman
20. Pig Pig Goes To Camp by David McPhail
21. The Grand Master Jumping Teacher, Bernard Meets Jerome, The Great Jumping Glump by David McPhail
22. Something Queer at the Ballpark by Elizabeth Levy
23. Home Alone by Todd Strasser
24. Simpson Mania no author recorded
25. Giant Pandas by John Bonnett Wexo
26. Babar's Mystery by Laurent de Brunhoff
27. The Great Escape by Peter Lippman

28. The Last Gremlin by Warner Bros.
29. Matthew and the Midnight Tow Truck by Allen Morgan
30. Hunting the Dinosaurs by Dougal Dixon
31. Tyrone the Horrible by Hans Wilhelm
32. Prince What A Mess by Frank Muir
33. Tikki Tikki Tembo by Arlene Mosel
34. Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig
35. The Funny Little Woman by Arlene Mosel
36. I am Not Going To Get Up Today by Dr. Seuss
37. The Spooky Fall of Prewitt Peacock by Bill Peet
38. What do you do with a Kangaroo? by Mercer Mayer

Subject #4

1. If a Dinosaur Came To Dinner by Jane Belk Moncure
2. The Way Mothers Are by Miriam Schleen
3. Put Me In The Zoo by Robert Lopshire
4. Just For You by Mercer Mayer
5. Gretzky, An Autobiography by Wayne Gretzky
6. My Grandfather Died Today by Joan Fasler
7. Spot Goes to the Circus by Eric Hill
8. Spot Goes to the Farm by Eric Hill
9. Big Red Fire Engine by Rose Greydanus
10. My Secret Hiding Place by Rose Greydanus
11. Pussy Cat, Pussy Cat a Nursery Rhyme
12. Round Is A Pancake by Joan Sullivan
13. Dinosaur in Trouble by Sharon Gordon
14. Avocado Book by John Burningham
15. Things I Like by Anthony Browne
16. Gorilla by Anthony Browne
17. Arthur's Loose Tooth by Lillian Hoban
18. All By Myself by Mercer Mayer
19. The Big Sneeze by Alice Brown
20. Noah's Ark by Lynda Hayward
21. Arthur's Pen Pal by Lillian Hoban
22. Polly Wants A Cracker by Bobbie Hamsa
23. Mine's The Best by Crosby Bonssa
24. Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss
25. Bears On Wheels by Stan and Jan Berenstain
26. Friendly Snowman by Sharon Gordon
27. Something Good by Robert Munsch
28. Three Billy Goats Gruff Folktale illus. by Ellen Appleby
29. Who's Afraid of the Dark by Crosby Bonsall
30. Stop That Rabbit by Sharon Peters
31. Me Too by Mercer Mayer
32. Susie Goes Shopping by Rose Greydanus
33. Messy Mark by Sharon Peters
34. What A Dog by Sharon Gordon
35. Are You My Mother? by P.D. Eastman
36. Tree House Fun by Rose Greydanus
37. Hop On Pop by Dr. Seuss

38. Blueberries for Sale by Robert McCloskey
39. Fido by Stephanie Calmenson
40. Have you Seen Josephine by Stephane Poulin

Subject #5

1. Pelicans by Candace Savage
2. The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse by Graeme Kent
3. Animals in the Wild by Joanne Ryder
4. The Saints Vol.II by Louis M. Savary
5. Aesop's Fables retold by Graeme kent
6. The Ten Commandments by Lawrence Lovasik
7. The Faeries by Susie Sanders
8. The Princess with the Golden Hair by Susie Sanders
9. What A Dog! by Sharon Gordon
10. Animals in the Zoo by Rose Greydanus
11. Stop That Rabbit by Sharon Peters
12. My First Book of Nursery Rhymes assorted authors
13. Dinosaur in Trouble by Sharon Peters
14. Puppet Show by Sharon Peters
15. Easter Bunny's Lost Egg by Sharon Peters
16. Tree House Fun by Rose Greydanus
17. Sounds of Home by Bill Martin Jr.
18. Let's Talk About Lying by Joy Berry
19. Let's Talk About Cheating by Joy Berry
20. Susie Goes Shopping by Rose Greydanus
21. Mercury and the Woodman by Graeme Kent
22. The Peacock and the Crane by Graeme Kent
23. Oh The Thinks You Can Think by Dr. Seuss
24. My Secret Hiding Place by Rose Greydanus
25. Arthur's Baby by Marc Brown
26. Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You! by Dr. Seuss
27. Stega Nona by Tomie de Paola
28. The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins by Dr. Seuss
29. Freddie The Frog First Start Easy to Read Book
30. The Kite Arnold Lobel
31. I Am Not Going to Get Up Today by Dr. Seuss
32. The Ox and the Frogs by Graeme Kent
33. Mike's New Bike by Rose Greydanus
34. Feel The Wind by Arthur Dorros
35. Christmas Surprise by Sharon Gordon
36. Clifford at the Circus by Norman Bidwell
37. Happy Birthday by Sharon Peters
38. Happy Jack by Sharon Peters
39. Song and Dance Man by Karen Ackerman
40. Kindness by Jane Belk Moncure
41. Let's Talk About Being Rude by Joy Berry
42. Alvin The Angel by Emily Jones
43. The Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss
44. The Piping Fisherman by Graeme Kent

45. The Berenstain Bears and the Sitter by Stan & Jan Berenstain
46. Sleeping Beauty Disney Version
47. The Wolf and The Horse by Graeme Kent
48. The Fox and The Bramble by Graeme Kent
49. The Lamp by Graeme Kent
50. The Preaching of John The Baptist by Collins
51. Spooky Night by Natalie Savage Colson
52. Romeo and Smurfette by Peyo
53. Winnie The Pooh and Some Bees by A.A. Milne

Subject #6

1. Try It Again Sam by Judith Viorst
2. Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst
3. Alexander Who Used To Be Rich Last Sunday by Judith Viorst
4. How To Eat Fried Worms by Thomas Rockwell
5. Rosie and Michael by Judith Viorst
6. Home Alone by Todd Strasser
7. Freddie The Frog First Starter Easy To Read Book
8. The Kite by Arnold Lobel
9. The Secret Garden by Frances H. Burnett
10. My Pet Monster by Mercer Mayer
11. Tyrone the Horrible by Hans Wilhelm
12. There's A Dinosaur In the Park by Rodney Martin
13. In A Dark, Dark Room by Alvin Schwartz

Subject #7

1. The Daring Rescue of Marlon The Swimming Pig by Susan Saunders
2. The Pain and the Great One by Judy Blume
3. The Ordinary Bath by Dennis Lee
4. Three Coats of Benny Bunny no author recorded
5. The Mystery of the Red Mitten by Steven Kellogg
6. No Girls Allowed by Stan and Jan Berenstain
7. Freddie the Frog First Starter Easy To Read Book
8. Messy Mark First Starter Easy to Read Book

Subject #8

1. Freckle Juice by Judy Blume
2. Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst
3. Alexander Who Used To Be Rich Last Sunday by Judith Viorst
4. It's Not Easy Being A Bunny by Marilyn Sadler
5. I Am Not Going To Get Up Today by Dr. Seuss

6. Scrubs on Skates no author recorded
7. Mortimer Be Quiet by Robert Munsch
8. The Fright Face Contest by Stephen Mooser
9. There Was An Old Lady That Swallowed A Fly Traditional
10. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles - Sky High no author recorded
11. Hardy Boys - The Treasure Tower by Franklin W. Dixon
12. Nursery Rhymes various authors
13. Fox in Sox by Dr. Seuss
14. Cat In the Hat by Dr. Seuss
15. Cat In the Hat Comes Back by Dr. Seuss
16. The Magic School Bus - Inside the Human Body by Joanna Cole
17. The Magic School Bus - At the Water Works by Joanna Cole
18. The Magic School Bus - Inside the Earth by Joanna Cole

Subject #9

1. Are You My Mother? by P.D. Eastman
2. I Won't Go To Bed by Harriet Ziefert
3. Chester by Syd Hoff
4. Heather's Feathers by Leatie Weiss
5. Thomas' Snowsuit by Robert Munsch
6. Albert's Toothache by Barbara Williams
7. Pig Pig Goes to Camp by David McPhail
8. Little Miss Bossy by Hargreavey
9. Night Ride by B. and M. Karlin
10. Amelia Bedelia's Family Album by Peggy Parish
11. What's Under My Bed? by James Stevenson
12. Over The Rainbow by L. Frank Baum
13. Hug Me by Patti Stern
14. My Mommy Says There Aren't Any Zombies, Ghosts or Vampires by Judith Viorst
15. Who Can Trust You Kangaroo by Richard Hefter
16. Nate the Great and the Sticky Case by M.W. Sharmat
17. Boss For A Week by L. Handy
18. Nate the Great and the Lost List by M.W. Sharmat
19. Hatte Rabbit by Dick Gackenback
20. Fat Frogs Amazing Day by Connie Turner
21. Spot Goes to the Beach by Eric Hill
22. The Doorbell Rang by Pat Hutchins
23. The Kite by Arnold Lobel
24. Murmel, Murmel, Murmel by Robert Munsch
25. Harry and the Terrible Whatzit by Dick Gachenback
26. Pigs by Robert Munsch
27. The Cook no author recorded
28. Beady Bear by Don Freeman
29. Frog and Toad Together by Arnold Lobel
30. The Little Wood Duck by Brian Wildsmith

31. Teddy Ruxpin - Teddy's Birthday no author given
32. Teddy Ruxpin - The Airship no author given
33. Teddy Ruxpin - One More Spot no author given
34. Has Droofus the Dragon Lost His Head by Bill Plett
35. Who Said Meow by Marcia Poloshken
36. The Golden Fairy Tale Collection assorted authors
37. Something Queer on Vacation by Elizabeth Levey
38. I Used to be Afraid by Sally Hudson McMillan
39. Knock Knocks by Gary Chuelewski
40. Something Queer at the Library by Elizabeth Levey
41. A Letter To Jenny by Ezra Jack Keats
42. Outdoor Tales no author given

Subject #10

1. Basil Brush in the Jungle by Peter Firmin
2. Furlie Cat by Berniece Freschet
3. Chicken Soup With Rice by Maurice Sendak
4. Puddleman by Ted Staunton
5. Stone Soup by Marilyn Sapienza
6. Manners: The Visit by Alison Tharen
7. Curious George Flies A Kite by Margaret Rey
8. The Big Bunny and the Easter Eggs by Steven Kellogg
9. The Puppy Nobody Wanted by A.C. Chandler
10. Alf - A Day at the Fair by Johnson Hill
11. There's a Dragon in my Closet by John F. Green
12. How Spider Saved the Baseball Game by Robert Kraus
13. Clifford's Halloween by Norman Bridwell
14. Dumbo Walt Disney Productions
15. Garfield the Fussy Cat by Norma Simone
16. The New Baby by Mercer Mayer
17. Just Grandma and Me by Mercer Mayer
18. The Skeleton Inside You by Philip Bolestringo
19. The Hockey Sweater by Roch Carrier
20. 50 Below Zero by Robert Munsch
21. My Brother the Gross Out by Micheal Pellowski
22. Boxcar Children by Gertrude Warner
23. Bobbsey Twins by Laura Lee Hope
24. MishMash by Molly Cone

Subject #11

1. Baseball, Football, Daddy and Me by David Friend
2. The Big Kite Contest by Dorotha Ruthstrom
3. A Giraffe and A Half by Shel Silverstein
4. Pig Pig Rides by David McPhail
5. Pig Pig Goes To Camp by David McPhail
6. Gorp and The Space Pirates by Irwin Ross
7. Lionel in the Fall by Stephen Krensky
8. Gingerbread Man by Tom & Bonnie Holmes
9. Up in the Air no author recorded

10. Moon Rocket no author recorded
11. The 101 Dalmatians Disney Version
12. Being Brave is the Best no author recorded
13. Desmond the Dragon no author recorded
14. Miss Pollywobble no author recorded
15. Tab's Wish no author recorded
16. Gleem the Giant no author recorded
17. The Impatient Witch no author recorded
18. Sing Lo and the Giant no author recorded
19. The Dancing Shoes no author recorded
20. Wynken, Blinken and Nod no author recorded
21. A Pig Called Fancy no author recorded
22. One For Big Bird Sesame Street Book
23. Grovers Bedtime Story Sesame Street Book
24. Good Night Rubber Duckie Sesame Street Book
25. Ben's New Buddy no author recorded
26. A Sister For Sam no author recorded
27. Book of Bedtime Stories assorted authors
28. Rudolph no author recorded

Subject #12

1. Millions of Cats by Wanda Gag
2. Danny and the Dinosaur by Syd Hoff
3. A Pocket For Corduroy by Don Freeman
4. Spot Goes to the Beach by Eric Hill
5. Mickey Mouse's Picnic by Jane Wernette
6. Lady and the Tramp Disney Version
7. Hand, Hand Finger Thumb by Al Perkins
8. The Pony Engine by Doris Garn
9. Is Your Mama a Llama? by Deborah Guarino
10. The Holiday Dragon by Ray Broekel
11. Little Miss Helpfull by Roger Hargreaves
12. Peter Rabbit in Mr. McGregor's Garden by Cory Wash
13. A Busy Day by Cyndy Szekers
14. Me and My Dad by Mercer Mayer
15. The Wheels on the Bus by Maryann Kovalski
16. Frog and Toad Together by Arnold Lobel
17. The Merry Mouse Schoolhouse by Priscilla Hillman
18. Brenda and Edward by Maryann Kovalski
19. Tally-ho Pinkerton by Steven Kellogg
20. The Herself the Elf by Lisa Norby
21. The Black Pony by Walter Farley
22. Red is Best by Kathy Stinson
23. How Many Are in this Old Car? by Colin and Jacqui Hawkins
24. Big or Little? by Kathy Stinson
25. Grasshopper on the Road by Arnold Lobel
26. The Kite by Arnold Lobel
27. Freddie the Frog First Starter Easy To Read Book
28. 10 Bears in my Bed by Stan Mack

29. First Snow by Emily Arnold McCully
30. Frog and Toad All Year by Arnold Lobel
31. Huge Harold by Bill Peet
32. Nobody's Perfect by Norma Simon
33. Singing Wheels The Alice and Jerry Books
34. Little Bear's Friend by Else Holmelund Minarik
35. Just For You by Mercer Mayer
36. Hello There by Cecile Gagnon
37. There's A Nighmare in My Closet by Mercer Mayer
38. Funny Bones by Janet & Allan Ahlberg
39. Thomas's Snowsuit by Robert Munsch
40. Read It Yourself by Fran Hunia
41. Me Too! by Mercer Mayer
42. A Tiger Came To Dinner by JoAnn Nelson
43. Peanut Butter and Jelly by JoAnn Nelson
44. Just Go To Bed by Mercer Mayer
45. A Magic Box by Albert J. Harris
46. Woody Woodpecker Takes A Trip by Walter Lantz

Subject #13

1. Cully Cully and the Bear by Wilson Gage
2. The Gingerbread Boy by Paul Galdone
3. Just Like Daddy by Frank Asch
4. The Balancing Act by Merle Peek
5. Big & Little by Ruth Krauss
6. The Three Little Pigs by James Marshall
7. Two Greedy Bears by Mirra Ginsburg
8. The Wobbly Tooth by Nancy Evans Cooney
9. The Boy Who Was Followed Home by Margaret Mahy
10. Lambs for Dinner by Betsy and Guilis Maestro
11. Hurry Up, Franklin by Paulette Bourgeois
12. Franklin in the Dark by Paulette Bourgeois
13. Bad Dog by Ned Delaney
14. Trains by Gail Gibbons
15. Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst
16. Clifford and the Grouchy Neighbours by Norman Bridwell
17. Mr. Little's Noisy Car by Richard Fowler
18. Clifford Gets A Job by Norman Bridwell
19. Tillie and the Wall by Leo Lionni
20. Rotten Ralph by Jack Gantos
21. Gus Goes To School by Jane Thayer
22. Mr. SIlly by Roger Hargreaves
23. Arthur's Tooth by Marc Brown
24. Phil the Ventriloquist by Robert Kraus
25. Red Riding Hood by James Marshall
26. The Doorbell Rang by Pat Hutchins
27. Geraldine's Blanket by Holly Keller
28. Geraldine's Big Snow by Holly Keller
29. What Is It? school reader

30. Amanda's Dinosaur by Wendy Orr
31. Patrick's Dinosaur by Carol Carrick
32. Jump Frog Jump by Robert Kalan
33. Building A House by Byron Barton
34. Louie's Search by Ezra Jack Keats
35. Mary Wore Her Red Dress by Merle Peek
36. Chicken Little by Steven Kellogg
37. A Fish for Mrs. Gardenia by Yossi Abolafia
38. Night Ride by Michael Gay
39. The Cow That Went Oink by Bernard Most
40. Hi Bears, Bye Bears by Niki Yektai
41. Ira Says Goodbye by Bernard Waber
42. Mike's New Bike by Rose Greydanus
43. Big Red Fire Engine by Rose Greydanus
44. Randy's Dandy Lions by Bill Peet
45. The Talking Eggs by Robert D. San Souci
46. Horseshoe Harry and The Whale by Adele deLeeuw
47. I Should Have Stayed in Bed by Joan M. Lexau
48. The Housekeeper's Dog by Jerry Smath
49. Brer Rabbit Plays Some Tricks no author recorded
50. Henry's Important Date by Robert Quackenbush
51. The Man Who Cooked For Himself by Phyllis Krasilovsky
52. Dopey Gets Lost Disney
53. Hiawatha the Brave Hunter Disney
54. Just For You by Mercer Mayer
55. Pickle Things by Marc Brown
56. But No Elephants by Jerry Smath
57. Gregory The Terrible Eater by Mitchell Sharmat
58. Magic Growing Powder by Janet Quin Harkin
59. Henry's Awful Mistake by Robert Quackenbush
60. Miss Mopp's Lucky Day by Leslie McGuire
61. Witches Four by Marc Brown
62. Aladdin and the Dancing Princesses Disney
63. Thank You Nicky by Harriet Ziefert
64. Pickle Things by Marc Brown
65. When I Get Bigger by Mercer Mayer
66. Just Me and My Little Sister by Mercer Mayer
67. Just For You by Mercer Mayer
68. Across the Water reading series from school
69. Moira's Birthday by Robert Munsch
70. Thomas's Snowsuit by Robert Munsch
71. The Paper Bag Princess by Robert Munsch
72. Golly Gump Swallowed A Fly by Robert Munsch
73. Dirty Feet by Steven Knoll
74. The Very Bumpy Bus Ride by Michaela Muntean

Subject #14

1. NO BOOK LIST AVAILABLE

APPENDIX E

BOOKS USED BY THE INVESTIGATOR

Pattern Books

1. Brown Bear Brown Bear by Bill Martin Jr.
2. Chicken Soup With Rice by Maurice Sendak
3. Jump Frog Jump by Byron Barton
4. My Cat Likes To Hide In Boxes by Eve Sutton
5. Inside, Outside, Upside Down by Stan & Jan Berenstain
6. Over In The Meadow by Ezra Jack Keats
7. Sing a Song of Mother Goose illus by Barbara Reid
8. If I Were You by Brian Wildsmith
9. The Island by Brian Wildsmith
10. Cat on a Mat by Brian Wildsmith
11. Giddy Up by Brian Wildsmith
12. Have You Seen My Duckling by Nancy Tafuri
13. Freddie The Frog by Rose Greydanus
14. Alligator Pie by Dennis Lee

Other Books Used

1. Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst
2. Tyrone The Horrible by Hans Wilhelm
3. Just For You by Mercer Mayer
4. The New Baby Calf by Chase/Reid
5. Red Is Best by Kathy Stinson
6. Edward Buys A Pet by Michaela Morgan
7. Lizzy's Lion by Dennis Lee
8. The Great Big Enormous Turnip by Oxenbury/Tolstoy
9. Vegetable Soup - A Sesame Street Book by Freudberg/Geiss
10. The Mitten by Alvin Tresselt
11. The Polar Express by Chris von Allsburg
12. Tikki Tikki Tembo retold by Arlene Mosel
13. Why Mosquito's Buzz in People's Ears by Aardema/Dillon
14. Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig
15. Wilford Gordon McDonald Partridge by Mem Fox
16. Owls in the Family by Farley Mowat
17. Three Billy Goats Gruff Folktale illus. by Ellen Appleby
18. Are you My Mother? by P.D. Eastman
19. Put Me In The Zoo by Robert Lopshire
20. Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown
21. Where's Spot and other Spot Books by Eric Hill
22. Frog and Toad Books by Arnold Lobel
23. Franklin in the Dark by Brenda Clark
24. Ira Sleeps Over by Bernard Waber

APPENDIX F

SUGGESTIONS TO MAXIMIZE STORY READING SESSION

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN YOU ARE READING STORYBOOKS WITH YOUR CHILDREN

(1) Pick a book your child will enjoy.

(2) Choose a quiet place to read, away from distractions.

(3) Make sure you and your child are comfortable and not tired, angry or rushed.

(4) Discuss the book before reading. Draw their attention to the name of the book, and the cover pictures. Try to have them predict what the book might be about. Then say, "let's read and find out."

(5) Stop periodically to recheck predictions and change them, if necessary.

(6) In pattern books (books that repeat a line or lines) begin to leave off the end words of sentences and let your child fill in the blank.

(7) After reading, try to have your child re-tell the story in their own words. If they resist retelling, then ask questions that will help trigger their memory. Some sample questions include: What happened first in the story?; What happened next?; What would you have done if you were _____? (name of character)

DO NOT DO THIS EVERYDAY OR WITH EVERY BOOK. SOMETIMES YOU JUST HAVE TO READ AND LET THEM RELAX AND ENJOY THE STORY WITHOUT QUIZZING THEM.

APPENDIX G

SAMPLE CHARACTER SKETCHES

SAMPLE OF A CHARACTER SKETCH BY A STUDENT

My Brother

My brother is mean sometimes and sometimes nice. But mostly mean. He is mean when he beats me up. When he is nice he plays Nintendo with me. He has floppy hair. He likes to wear Nike air shoes, and white socks, green army pants, and white shirts and a Dodgers cap.

He is in grade five. He drinks Coca Cola Classic all the time. He kind of hates heights. He likes to watch TV. He likes to watch Flash, and other TV shows. He plays Mario 3, Paperboy, Mario 1, Double Dragon and Blades of Steel. Almost every time he isn't playing, he is at the table writing and drawing.

SAMPLE OF A CHARACTER SKETCH BY A PARENT

My Son

_____ is our first born son who has many fine qualities. He is a quiet, considerate and sensitive boy who likes to take responsibility when he's on his own. He enjoys reading to his little brother at bedtime when I've gone out for the evening. He makes sure all is well before he goes to bed. Besides playing with his friends on the weekends he really looks forward to Saturday nights when we have pizza, pepsi and watch a family movie together. During school breaks he enjoys going to live theatre productions. He enjoys one on one activities the most.